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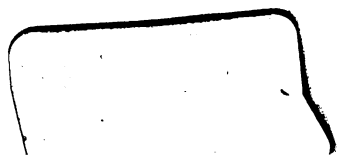
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IN
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WALSTEIN;

OR,

A CURE FOR MELANCHOLY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "VIVIAN GREY," "CONTARINI FLEMING," &c.

CHAPTER I.

CONTAINING A PHILOSOPHICAL CONVERSATION BETWEEN A
PHYSICIAN AND HIS PATIENT.

DR. DE SCHULEMBOURG was the most eminent physician in Dresden. He was not only a physician; he was a philosopher. He studied the idiosyncrasy of his patients, and was aware of the fine and secret connexion between medicine and morals. One morning, Dr. de Schulembourg was summoned to Walstein. The physician looked forward to the interview with his patient with some degree of interest. He had often heard of Walstein, but had never yet met that gentleman, who had only recently returned from his travels, and who had been absent from his country for several years.

When Dr. de Schulembourg arrived at the house of Walstein, he was admitted into a circular hall, containing the busts of the Cæsars, and ascending a double staircase of noble proportion, was ushered into a magnificent gallery. Copies in marble of the most celebrated ancient statues were ranged on each side of this gallery. Above them, were suspended many beautiful Italian and Spanish pictures, and between them, were dwarf bookcases, full of tall volumes in sumptuous bindings, and crowned with

Etruscan vases and rare bronzes. Schulembourg, who was a man of taste, looked around him with great satisfaction. And while he was gazing on a group of diaphanous cherubim, by Murillo, an artist of whom he had heard much and knew little, his arm was gently touched, and turning round, Schulembourg beheld his patient, a man past the prime of youth, but of very distinguished appearance, and with a very frank and graceful manner. "I hope you will pardon me, my dear sir, for permitting you to be a moment alone," said Walstein, with an ingratiating smile.

"Solitude, in such a scene, is not very wearisome," replied the physician. "There are great changes in this mansion since the time of your father, Mr. Walstein."

"'Tis an attempt to achieve that which we are all sighing for," replied Walstein—"the Ideal. But for myself, although I assure you not a poco crante, I cannot help thinking there is no slight dash of the common place."

"Which is a necessary ingredient of all that is excellent," replied Schulembourg.

Walstein shrugged his shoulders, and then invited the physician to be seated. "I wish to consult you, Dr. Schulembourg," he observed, somewhat abruptly. "My metaphysical opinions induce me to believe that a physician is the only philosopher. I am perplexed by my own case. I am in excellent health, my appetite is good, my digestion perfect. My temperament I have ever considered to be of a very sanguine character. I have nothing upon my mind. I am in very easy circumstances. Hitherto, I have only committed blunders in life, and never crimes. Nevertheless, I have, of late, become the victim of a deep and inscrutable melancholy, which I can ascribe to no cause, and can divert by no resource. Can you throw any light upon my dark feelings? Can you remove them?"

"How long have you experienced them?" inquired the physician.

"More or less ever since my return," replied Walstein; "but most grievously during the last three months."

"Are you in love?" inquired Schulembourg.



"Certainly not," replied Walstein, "and I fear I never shall be."

"You have been?" inquired the physician.

"I have had some fancies, perhaps too many," answered the patient; "but youth deludes itself. My idea of a heroine has never been realised, and, in all probability, never will be."

"Besides an idea of a heroine," said Schulembourg, "you have also, if I mistake not, an idea of a hero?"

"Without doubt," replied Walstein. "I have preconceived for myself a character which I have never achieved."

"Yet, if you have never met a heroine nearer your ideal than your hero, why should you complain?" rejoined Schulembourg.

"There are moments when my vanity completes my own portrait," said Walstein.

"And there are moments when our imagination completes the portrait of our mistress," rejoined Schulembourg.

"You reason," said Walstein. "I was myself once fond of reasoning, but the greater my experience, the more I have become convinced that man is not a rational animal. He is only truly good or great when he acts from passion."

"Passion is the ship, and reason is the rudder," observed Schulembourg.

"And thus we pass the ocean of life," said Walstein. "Would that I could discover a new continent of sensation!"

"Do you mix much in society?" said the physician.

"By fits and starts," said Walstein. "A great deal when I first returned: of late little."

"And your distemper has increased in proportion with your solitude?"

"It would superficially appear so," observed Walstein; "but I consider my present distemper as not so much the result of solitude, as the reaction of much converse with society. I am gloomy at present, from a sense of disappointment of the past."

"You are disappointed," observed Schulembourg. "What then did you expect?"

"I do not know," replied Walstein; "that is the very thing I wish to discover."

"How do you in general pass your time," inquired the physician.

"When I reply *in doing nothing*, my dear Doctor," said Walstein, "you will think that you have discovered the cause of my disorder. But perhaps you will only mistake an effect for a cause."

"Do you read?"

"I have lost the faculty of reading: early in life I was a student, but books become insipid when one is rich with the wisdom of a wandering life."

"Do you write?"

"I have tried, but mediocrity disgusts me. In literature a second-rate reputation is no recompence for the evils that authors are heirs to."

"Yet without making your compositions public, you might relieve your own feelings in expressing them. There is a charm in creation."

"My sympathies are strong," replied Walstein. "In an evil hour, I might descend from my pedestal, I should compromise my dignity with the herd, I should sink before the first shaft of ridicule."

"You did not suffer from this melancholy when travelling?"

"Occasionally: but the fits were never so profound, and were very evanescent."

"Travel is action," replied Schulembourg. "Believe me, that in action you can alone find a cure."

"What is action?" inquired Walstein. "Travel I have exhausted. The world is quiet. There are no wars now, no revolutions. Where can I find a career?"

"Action," replied Schulembourg, "is the exercise of our faculties. Do not mistake restlessness for action. Murillo, who passed a long life almost within the walls of his native city, was a man of great action. Witness the convents and the churches that are covered with his exploits. A great student is a great actor, and as great

as a marshal or a statesman. You must act, Mr. Walstein, you must act, you must have an object in life; great or slight; still you must have an object. Believe me it is better to be a mere man of pleasure, than a dreamer."

"Your advice is profound," replied Walstein, "and you have struck upon a sympathetic chord. But what am I to do? I have no object."

"You are a very ambitious man," replied the physician.

"How know you that?" said Walstein, somewhat hastily and slightly blushing.

"We doctors know many strange things," replied Schulembourg with a smile. "Come, now, would you like to be prime minister of Saxony?"

"Prime minister of Oberon!" said Walstein, laughing; "'tis indeed a great destiny."

"Ah! when you have lived longer among us, your views will accommodate themselves to our limited horizon. In the mean time I will write you a prescription, provided you promise to comply with my directions."

"Do not doubt me, my dear Doctor."

Schulembourg seated himself at the table, and wrote a few lines which he handed to his patient. Walstein smiled as he read the prescription.

"Dr. de Schulembourg requests the honour of the Baron de Walstein's company at dinner, to-morrow at two o'clock."

Walstein smiled and looked a little perplexed, but he remembered his promise. "I shall with pleasure become your guest, Doctor."

CHAPTER II.

CONTAINING SOME FURTHER CONVERSATION.

WALSTEIN did not forget his engagement with his friendly physician. The house of Schulembourg was the most beautiful mansion in Dresden. It was situated in a delicious garden in the midst of the park, and had been presented to him by a grateful sovereign. It was a Palladian villa, which recalled the Brenta to the recollection of Walstein, flights of marble steps, airy colonnades, pediments of harmonious proportion, and all painted with classic frescoes. Orange trees clustered in groups upon the terrace, perfumed the summer air, rising out of magnificent vases sculptured in high relief, and amid the trees, confined by silver chains, were rare birds of radiant plumage, rare birds with prismatic eyes and bold ebon beaks, breasts flooded with crimson, and long tails of violet and green. The declining sun shone brightly in the light blue sky, and threw its lustre upon the fanciful abode, above which, slight and serene, floated the airy crescent of the young white moon.

"My friend too, I perceive, is a votary of the Ideal," exclaimed Walstein.

The carriage stopped, Walstein mounted the marble steps, and was ushered through a hall, wherein was the statue of a single nymph, into an octagonal apartment. Schulembourg himself had not arrived. Two men moved away as he was announced, from a lady whom they surrounded. The lady was Madame de Schulembourg, and she came forward with infinite grace to apologise for the absence of her husband and to welcome her guest.

Her appearance was very remarkable. She was young and strangely beautiful. Walstein thought that he never beheld such lustrous locks of ebon hair shading a countenance of such dazzling purity. Her large and deep

blue eyes gleamed through their long black lashes. The expression of her face was singularly joyous. Two wild dimples played like meteors on her soft round cheeks. A pink veil worn over her head was carelessly tied under her chin, and fastened with a white rose of pearls. Her vest and train of white satin did not conceal her sylph-like form and delicate feet. She held forth a little white hand to Walstein adorned only by a single enormous ruby, and welcomed him with inspiring ease.

"I do not know whether you are acquainted with your companions, Mr. Walstein," said Madame de Schulembourg. Walstein looked around and recognised the English minister, and had the pleasure of being introduced, for the first time, to a celebrated sculptor.

"I have heard of your name, not only in Germany," said Walstein, addressing the latter gentleman, "you have left your fame behind you at Rome. If the Italians are excusably envious, their envy is at least accompanied with admiration." The gratified sculptor bowed and slightly blushed. Walstein loved art and artists. He was not one of those frigid petty souls who are ashamed of evincing feeling in society. He felt keenly and expressed himself without reserve. But nature had invested him with a true nobility of manner as well as of mind. He was ever graceful, even when enthusiastic.

"It is difficult to remember we are in the North," said Walstein to Madame de Schulembourg, "amid these colonnades and orange trees."

"It is thus that I console myself for beautiful Italy," replied the lady, "and, indeed, to-day the sun favours the design."

"You have resided long in Italy?" inquired Walstein.

"I was born at Milan," replied Madame de Schulembourg, "my father commanded a Hungarian regiment in garrison."

"I thought that I did not recognise an Italian physiognomy," said Walstein, looking somewhat earnestly at the lady.

"Yet I have a dash of the Lombard blood in me, I assure you," replied Madame de Schulembourg, smiling; "is it not so, Mr. Revel?"

The Englishman advanced and praised the beauty of the lady's mother, whom he well knew. Then he asked Walstein when he was at Milan; then they exchanged more words respecting Milanese society; and while they were conversing, the Doctor entered, followed by a servant: "I must compensate for keeping you from dinner," said their host, "by having the pleasure of announcing that it is prepared."

He welcomed Walstein with warmth: Mr. Revel led Madam to the dining-room. The table was round, and Walstein seated himself at her side.

The repast was light and elegant, unusual characteristics of a German dinner. Madame de Schulembourg conversed with infinite gaiety, but with an ease which showed that to charm was with her no effort. The Englishman was an excellent specimen of his nation, polished and intelligent, without that haughty and graceless reserve which is so painful to a finished man of the world. The host was himself ever animated and cheerful, but calm and clear—and often addressed himself to the artist, who was silent, and, like students in general, constrained. Walstein himself, indeed, was not very talkative, but his manner indicated that he was interested, and when he made an observation it was uttered with facility, and arrested attention by its justness or its novelty.—It was an agreeable party.

They had discussed several light topics; at length they diverged to the supernatural. Mr. Revel, as is customary with Englishmen, who are very sceptical, affected for a moment a belief in spirits. With the rest of the society, however, it was no light theme. Madame de Schulembourg avowed her profound credulity. The artist was a decided votary. Schulembourg philosophically accounted for many appearances, but he was a magnetiser, and his explanations were more marvellous than the portents.

"And you, Mr. Walstein," said Madame de Schulembourg, "what is your opinion?"

"I am willing to yield to any faith that distracts my thoughts from the burthen of daily reality," replied Walstein.—

"You would just suit Mr. Novalis then," observed Mr. Revel, bowing to the sculptor.

"Novalis is an astrologer," said Madame de Schulembourg; "I think he would just suit you."

"Destiny is a grand subject," observed Walstein, "and although I am not prepared to say that I believe in fate, I should nevertheless not be surprised to read my fortunes in the stars."

"That has been the belief of great spirits," observed the sculptor, his countenance brightening with more assurance.

"It is true," replied Walstein, "I would rather err with my great namesake and Napoleon than share the orthodoxy of ordinary mortality."

"That is a dangerous speech, Baron," said Schulembourg.

"With regard to destiny," said Mr. Revel, who was in fact a materialist of the old school, "every thing depends upon a man's nature; the ambitious will rise, and the grovelling will crawl—those whose volition is strong will believe in fate, and the weak-minded accounts for the consequences of his own incongruities by execrating chance."

Schulembourg shook his head. "By a man's nature, you mean his structure," said the physician, "much, doubtless, depends upon structure, but structure is again influenced by structure. All is subservient to sympathy."

"It is true," replied the sculptor; "and what is the influence of the stars on human conduct, but sympathy of the highest degree?"

"I am little accustomed to metaphysical discussions," remarked Walstein; "this is indeed a sorry subject to amuse a fair lady with, Madame de Schulembourg."—"On the contrary," she replied, "the mystical ever delights me." "Yet," continued Walstein, "perceiving that the discontent and infelicity of man generally increases in an exact ratio with his intelligence and his knowledge, I am often tempted to envy the ignorant and the simple."

"A man can only be content," replied Schulembourg, "when his career is in harmony with his organization."

Man is an animal formed for great physical activity, and this is the reason why the vast majority, in spite of great physical suffering, are content.—The sense of existence, under the influence of the action which is necessary to their living, counterbalances all misery. But when a man has a peculiar structure, when he is born with a predisposition, or is, in vulgar language, a man of genius, his content entirely depends upon that predisposition being developed and indulged. And this is philosophical education, that sublime art so ill-comprehended!"

"I agree with you," said Revel, who recollected the nonsense-verses of Eton, and the logic of Christ Church; "all the scrapes and unhappiness of my youth, and I assure you they were not inconsiderable, are to be ascribed to the obstinate resolution of my family to make a priest out of a man who wished to be a soldier."

"And I was disinherited because I would be a physician," replied Schulembourg; "but instead of a poor insignificant baron, I am now a noble in four kingdoms, and have the orders of all Europe, and that lady there was not ashamed to marry me."

"I was a swineherd in the wilds of Pomerania," said Novalis; his eye flashing with enthusiasm. "I ran away to Italy, but I broke my poor mother's heart."

There was a dead painful pause, in which Walstein interposed. "As for myself, I suppose I have no predisposition, or I have not found it out. Perhaps nature intended me for a swineherd, instead of a baron. This, however, I do know, that life is an intolerable burthen—at least it would be," he added, turning with a smile to his fair hostess, "were it not for occasionally meeting some one so inspiriting as you."

"Come," said Madame, rising, "the carriages are at the door. Let us take a drive. Mr. Walstein, you shall give me your opinion of my ponies."

CHAPTER III.

CONTAINING A DRIVE IN THE PARK WITH A VERY CHARMING
LADY.

MADAME DE SCHULEMBOURG's carriage, drawn by two beautiful Hanoverian ponies, cream in colour, with long manes and tails like floss silk, was followed by a britschka, but despatches called away Mr. Revel, and Novalis stole off to his studio. The doctor, as usual, was engaged. "Caroline," he said, as he bid his guest adieu, "I commend Mr. Walstein to your care. When I return, in the evening, do not let me find that our friend has escaped." "I am sure though unhappy he is not ungallant," replied Caroline, with a smile; and she took his offered arm, and ascended her seat.

Swiftly the little ponies scudded along the winding roads. The Corso was as yet but slightly attended. Caroline passed through the wide avenue without stopping, but sometimes recognising with bow and smile a fitting-by friend. They came to a wilder and woodier part of the park, the road lined on each side with linden trees, and in the distance vast beds of tall fern, tinged with the first rich hues of autumn.

"Here, Mr. Walstein," said Caroline, "with your permission, I shall take my afternoon walk." Thus speaking, she stopped the carriage, which she and her companion quitted. Walstein offered her his arm, but she declined it, folding herself up in her shawl.

"Which do you like best, Mr. Walstein, Constantnople or Dresden?" said Madame de Schulembourg.

"At this moment decidedly Dresden," replied her companion. "Ah! that is a compliment," said Madame de Schulembourg, after a moment's musing. "My dear Mr. Walstein," she continued, looking up with an arch expression, "never pay me compliments."

"You mistake me: it was not a compliment," replied Walstein. "It was a sincere and becoming tri-

bute of gratitude for three hours of endurable existence." "You know that you are my patient," rejoined Madame de Schulembourg. "I have orders to cure your melancholy. I am very successful in such complaints."

"I have no doubt of it," replied Walstein, with a slight bow.

"If we could but find out the cause!" continued Caroline. "I venture to believe that, after all, it will turn out an affair of the heart. Come, be frank with your physician. Tell me, have you left it captive with a fair Greek of the Isles, or a dark-eyed maiden of the Nile. Is our heroine a captive behind a Spanish jealousy, or in an Italian convent?"

"Women ever believe that all moods and tempers of man are consequences of their influence," replied Walstein, "and in general they are right."

"But in your case?"

"Very wrong."

"I am determined to find it out," said Madame de Schulembourg.

"I wish to heaven you could," said Monsieur de Walstein.

"I think a wandering life has spoiled you," said Caroline. "I think it must be civilization that you find wearisome."

"That would be very sublime," replied Walstein. "But I assure you, if there be one thing that disgusts me more than another, it is the anticipation of renewed travel! I have seen all that I wish, and more than I ever expected. All that I could experience now would be exertion without excitement, a dreadful doom. If I am not to experience pleasure, let me at least have the refuge of repose. The magic of change of scene is with me exhausted. If I am to live, I do not think that I could be tempted to quit this city; sometimes I think, scarcely even my house."

"I see how it is," exclaimed Madame de Schulembourg, shaking her head very knowingly, "you must marry."

"The last resource of feminine fancy!" exclaimed Walstein, almost laughing. "You would lessen my

melancholy, I suppose, on the principle of the division of gloom. I can assure you, my dear Madame de Schulembourg," he continued, in a very serious tone, "that, with my present sensations, I should consider it highly dishonourable to implicate any woman in my destiny."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Madame; "I can assure you, my dear Mr. Walstein, that I have a great many very pretty friends who will run the risk. 'Tis the best cure for melancholy, believe me. I was serious myself at times before I married, but you see I have got over my gloom."

"You have indeed," said Walstein; "and perhaps, were I Dr. de Schulembourg, I might be as gay."

"Another compliment! However, I accept it, because it is founded on truth. The fact is, I think you are too much alone."

"I have lived in a desert, and now I live in what is called the world," replied Walstein. "Yet in Arabia I was fairly content, and now I am—what I shall not describe, because it will only procure me your ridicule."

"Nay! not ridicule, Mr. Walstein. Do not think that I do not sympathise with your affliction, because I wish you to be as cheerful as myself. If you were fairly content in Arabia I shall begin to consider it an affair of climate."

"No," said Walstein, still very serious, "not an affair of climate—certainly not. The truth is, travel is a preparation, and we bear with its yoke as we do with all that is initiatory—with the solace of expectation. But my preparation can lead to nothing, and there appear to be no mysteries in which I am to be initiated."

"Then, after all, you want something to do?"

"No doubt."

"What shall it be?" inquired Madame de Schulembourg, with a thoughtful air.

"Ah! what shall it be?" echoed Walstein, in accents of despondence; "or rather what can it be? What can be more tame, more uninteresting, more unpromising, than all around? Where is there a career?"

"A career?" exclaimed Caroline. "What you want to set the world in a blaze! I thought you were a poetic dreamer, a listless, superfine speculator of an exhausted world. And all the time you are very ambitious!"

"I know not what I am," replied Walstein; "but I feel that my present lot is an intolerable burthen."

"But what can you desire! You have wealth, youth, and station, all the accidents of fortune which nature can bestow, and all for which men struggle. Believe me, you are born to enjoy yourself, nor do I see that you require any other career than the duties of your position. Believe me, my dear Mr. Walstein, life is a great business, and quite enough to employ any man's faculties."

"My youth is fast fading, which I do not regret," replied Walstein, "for I am not an admirer of youth. As for station, I attribute no magic to it, and wealth I only value because knowing from experience its capacity of producing pleasure; where I a beggar to-morrow, I should be haunted by no uneasy sensations. Pardon me, Madame de Schulembourg; your philosophy does not appear to be that of my friend the Doctor. We were told this afternoon that, to produce happiness, the nature of a being and his career must coincide. Now, what can wealth and station produce of happiness to me, if I have the mind of a bandit, or perhaps even of a mechanic."

"You must settle all this with Augustus," replied Madame de Schulembourg; "I am glad, however, to hear you abuse youth. I always tell Sidonia that he makes his heroes too young, which enrages him beyond description. Do you know him?"

"Only by fame."

"He would suit you. He is melancholy too, but only by fits. Would you like to make his acquaintance?"

"Authors are best known by their writings," replied Walstein; "I admire him, because, amid much wildness, he is a great reader of the human heart, and I find many echoes in his pages of what I dare only to think and to utter in solitude."

"I shall introduce you to him. He is exceedingly vain, and likes to make the acquaintance of an admirer."

"I entreat you not," replied Walstein, really alarmed.

"It is precisely because I admire him very much that I never wish to see him. What can the conversations of Sidonia be compared with his writings. His appearance and his manner will only destroy the ideal, in which it is always interesting to indulge."

"Well, be not alarmed! He is not now in Dresden. He has been leading a wild life for some time in our Saxon Switzerland, in a state of despair. I am the unhappy nymph who occasions his present desperation," continued Madame de Schulembourg, with a smile. "Do not think me heartless; all his passion is imagination. Change of scene ever cures him; he has written to me every week—his letters are each time more reasonable. I have no doubt he has by this time relieved his mind in some mad work which will amuse us all very much, and will return again to Dresden quite cool. I delight in Sidonia—he is my especial favourite."

After some little time the companions re-entered the carriage. The public drive was now full of sparkling equipages. Madame de Schulembourg gaily bowed as she passed along to many a beautiful friend.

"Dear girls, come home with us this eve," she exclaimed, as she curbed her ponies by the side of an open carriage, and addressed two young ladies who were seated within it with their mother. "Let me introduce Mr. Walstein to you—Madame de Manheim, the Misses de Manheim, otherwise Augusta and Amelia. Ask any of our friends whom you pass. There is Emilius—How do you do? Count Voyna, come home with us, and bring your Bavarian friend."

"How is Sidonia, Madame de Schulembourg," inquired Augusta.

"Oh, quite mad. He will not be sane this week. There is his last letter; read it, and return it to me when we meet. Adieu, Madame de Manheim; adieu, dear girls: do not stay long: adieu, adieu." So they drove away.

A SENTIMENTAL ADVENTURE.

BY MISS MITFORD.

THERE is a fashion in everything—more especially everything feminine—the very faults of the ladies (if ladies can have faults,) as well as the tenor by which those faults are distinguished, change with the changing time. The severe but honest puritan of the commonwealth was succeeded by the less rigid, but probably less sincere prude, who, from the restoration to George the Third's day, seems, if we may believe those truest painters of manners, the satirists and the comic poets, to have divided the realm of beauty with the fantastic coquette—*L'Allegro* reigning over one half of the the female world, *Il Penseroso* over the other.

With the decline of the artificial comedy, these two grand divisions amongst women which had given such life to the acted drama, and had added humour to the prose of Addison, and point to the verse of Pope, gradually died away. The Suspicious Husband of Dr. Hoadly, one of the wittiest and most graceful of those graceful and witty pictures of manners, which have now wholly disappeared from the comic scene, is, I think, nearly the last in which the characters are so distinguished. The wide reaching appellations of prude and coquette, the recognised title, the definite classification, the outward profession were gone, whatever might be the case with the internal propensities; and the sex, somewhat weary it may be of finding itself called by two names, neither of them very desirable, the one being very disagreeable, and the other a little haughty, branched off into innumerable sects, with all manner of divisions and sub-divisions, and has contrived to exhibit during the last sixty or seventy years as great a variety of humours good or bad, and to derive and obtain as many

epithets (most of them sufficiently ill-omened) as its various and capricious fellow-biped called man.

Amongst these epithets were two which I well remember to have heard applied some thirty years ago to more than one fair lady in the good town of Belford, but which have now passed away as completely as their companions, predecessors, coquette and prude. The "words of fear" in question were satirical and sentimental. With the first of these sad nick-names we have nothing to do. Child as I was, it seemed to me at the time,—and I think so more strongly on recollection,—that in two or three instances the imputation was wholly undeserved; that a girlish gaiety of heart on the one hand, and a womanly fineness of observation on the other, gave rise to an accusation which mixes a little, and very little cleverness with a great deal of ill nature. But with the fair satirist, be the appellation true or false, we have no concern; our business is with one lady of the class sentimental, and with one, and with one only, of those adventures to which ladies of that class are, to say the least, peculiarly liable.

Miss Selina Savage, (her detractors said that she was christened Sarah, founding upon certain testimony of I know not what value, of aunts and god-mothers; but I abide by her own signature, as now lying before me in a fine slender Italian hand, at the bottom of a note somewhat yellow by time, but still stamped in a French device of *pensées* and *soucis*, and still faintly smelling of a jar of roses: the object of the said note being to borrow "Mr. Pratt's exquisite Poem of Sympathy.") Miss Selina Savage (I hold by the autograph) was a young lady of uncertain age; there being on this point also a small variation of ten or a dozen years between her own assertions and those of her calumniators; but of a most sentimental aspect (in this respect all were agreed;) tall, fair, pale, and slender, she being so little encumbered with flesh and blood, and so little tinted with the diversity of colouring thereunto belonging, so completely blond in hair, eyes, and complexion, that a very tolerable portrait of her might be cut out in white paper, provided the paper were thin enough, or drawn in chalks, white and

black, upon a pale brown ground. Nothing could be too shadowy or too vapoury; the Castle Spectre, flourishing in all the glory of gauze drapery on the stage of Drury Lane—the ghosts of Ossian made out of the mists of the hills—were but types of Miss Selina Savage. Her voice was like her aspect, sighing, crying, dying; and her conversation as lachrymose as her voice; she sang sentimental songs, played sentimental airs, wrote sentimental letters, and read sentimental books; has given away her parrot for laughing, and turned off her postboy for whistling a country dance.

The abode of this amiable damsel was a small neat dwelling, somewhat inconveniently situated, at the back of the Holy Brook, between the Abbey Mills on the one side, and a great timber wharf on the other; with the stream moving between the carriage road and the house, and nothing to unite them but a narrow foot-bridge, which must needs be crossed in all weathers. It had, however, certain recommendations which more than atoned for these defects in the eyes of its romantic mistress; three middle sized cypress trees at one end of the court, in the front of her mansion two well-grown weeping willows; the other an address at “Holy Brook Cottage,” absolutely invaluable to such a correspondence, and standing in most advantageous contrast with the streets, terraces, crescents, and places of which Belford was for the most part composed; and a very fair chance of excellent material for the body of her letters by the abundant casualties and Humane Society cases afforded by the foot-bridge—no less than one old woman, three small children, and two drunken men having been ducked in the stream in the course of one winter. Drowning would have been too much of a good thing; but of that, from the shallowness of the water, there was happily no chance.

Miss Savage, with two quiet, orderly, light-footed, and soft-spoken maidens, had been for some years the solitary tenants of the pretty cottage by the Holy Brook. She had lost her father during her early childhood; and the death of her mother (a neat quiet old lady, whose interminable carpet work is among the earliest of my recol-

lections—I could draw the pattern now), and the absence of her brother, a married man with a large family and a prosperous business, who resided constantly in London, left the fair Selina the entire mistress of her fortune, her actions, and her residence. That she remained in Belford, although exclaiming against the place and its society—its gossiping morning visits, and its evening card-parties, as well as to the general want of refinement amongst its inhabitants—might be imputed partly perhaps to habit, and an aversion to the trouble of moving, and partly to a violent friendship between herself and another damsel of the same class, a good deal younger, and a great deal sillier, who lived two streets off, and whom she saw every day, and wrote to every hour.

Martha, or, as her friend chose to call her, Matilda Marshall, was the fourth or fifth daughter of a spirit merchant of the town. Frequent meetings at the circulating library introduced the fair ladies to each other, and a congeniality of taste brought about first an acquaintance, and then an intimacy, which difference of station (for Miss Savage was of the highest circle in this provincial society, and poor Martha was of no circle at all,) only seemed to cement the more firmly.

The Marshalls, flattered by Selina's notice of their daughter, and not sorry that that notice had fallen on the least useful and cheerful of the family, the one that amongst all their young people they could the most easily spare, put her time and her actions entirely into her own power, or rather into that of her patroness. Mr. Marshall, a calculating man of business, finding flirtation after flirtation go off without the conclusion matrimonial, and knowing the fortune to be considerable, began to look on Matilda as the probable heiress; and except from her youngest brother William, a clever but unlucky school boy, who delighted in plaguing his sister, and laughing at sentimental friendships, this intimacy, from which all but one member was sedulously excluded, was cherished and promoted by the whole family.

Very necessary was Miss Matilda at the Holy Brook cottage. She filled there the important parts of listener, adviser, and confidant, and filled them with an honest

and simple-hearted sincerity, which the most skilful flatterer that ever lived would have failed to imitate. She read the same books, sang the same songs, talked in the same tone, walked with the same air, and wore the same fashions; which upon her, she being naturally short and stout, and dark-eyed and rosy, had, as her brother William told her, about the same effect that armour similar to Don Quixote's would have produced upon Sancho Panza.

One of her chief services in the character of confidant, was of course to listen to the several love passages of which, since she was of the age of Juliet, her friend's history might be said to have consisted. How she had remained so long unmarried might have moved some wonder, since she seemed always immersed in the passion which leads to such a conclusion; but then her love was something like the stream that flowed before her door—a shallow brooklet, easy to slip in, and easy to slip out. From two or three imprudent engagements her brother had extricated her; and from one, the most dangerous of all, she had been saved by her betrothed having been claimed the week before the nuptials by another wife. At the moment of which we write, however, the fair Selina seemed once more in a fair way to change her name.

That she was fond of literature of a certain class we have already intimated; and, next after Sterne and Rousseau, the classics of her order, and their horde of vile imitators, whether sentimental novelists, or sentimental essayists, or sentimental dramatists, she delighted in the horde of nameless versifiers whom Gifford demolished; in other words, after bad prose her next favourite reading was bad verse; and as this sort of verse is quite as easy to write as to read—I should think of the two rather easier—she soon became no inconsiderable perpetrator of sonnets without rhyme, and songs without reason; and elegies, by an ingenious combination, equally deficient in both.

After writing this sort of verse, the next step is to put it in print; and in those days (we speak of above thirty years ago), when there was no Mrs. Hemans to send

grace and beauty, and purity of thought and feeling, into every corner of the kingdom—no Mary Howitt to add the strength and originality of a manly mind to the sensibility of a womanly fancy,—in those days the Poet's Corner of a country newspaper was the refuge of every poetaster in the county. So intolerably bad were the acrostics, the rebuses, the epigrams, and the epitaphs, which adorned those asylums for fugitive pieces, that a selection of the worst of them would really be worth printing amongst the Curiosities of Literature. A less vain person than Miss Selina Savage might have thought she did the Hampshire Courant honour in sending them an elegy on the death of a favourite bullfinch, with the signature of Eurinia.

It was printed forthwith, read with ecstatic admiration by the authoress and her friend, and with great amusement by William Marshall, who, now the spruce clerk of a spruce attorney, continued to divert himself with worming out of his simple sister all the secrets of herself and her friend, and then to pursue them with the most unmerciful ridicule. The elegy was printed, and in a fair way of being forgotten by all but the writer, when in the next number of the Courant appeared a complimentary sonnet addressed to the authoress of the elegy, and signed Orlando.

Imagine the delight of the fair Eurinia ! she was not in the least astonished,—a bad and inexperienced writer never is taken by surprise by any quantity of praise ;—but she was charmed and interested as much as woman could be ; she answered his sonnet by another (which, by the by, contained, according to Boileau's well-known recipe, and the practice of all nations, a quatrain too many ;) he replied to her rejoinder ; compliments flew thicker and faster ; and the poetical correspondence between Orlando and Eurinia became so tender, that the Editor of the H * * * shire Courant thought it only right to hint to the gentleman that the post-office would be a more convenient medium for his future communications.

As this intimation was accompanied by the address of the lady, it was taken in very good part ; and before the publication of the next number of the provincial weekly

journal, Miss Savage received the accustomed tribute of verse from Orlando, enveloped in a prose epistle, dated from a small town about thirty miles off, and signed Henry Turner.

An answer had been earnestly requested, and an answer the lady sent; and by return of post she received a reply, to which she replied with equal alertness; then came a love letter in full form; and then a petition for an interview; and to the first the lady answered anything but No! and to the latter she assented.

The time fixed for this important visit, it being now the merry month of May, was three o'clock in the day. He had requested to find her alone; and accordingly by one, P. M. she had dismissed her faithful confidante, promising to write to her the moment Mr. Turner was gone, had given orders to admit no one but a young gentleman who sent in his visiting ticket (such being the plan proposed by the innamorata), and began to set herself and her apartment in order for his reception—she herself in an elegant dishabille, between sentimental and pastoral, and her room in a confusion equally elegant, of music, books, and flowers; Zimmermann and Lavater on the table; and one of those dramas, those tragedies bourgeoises, or comedies larmoyantes, which it seems incredible that Beaumarchais, he that wrote the two matchless plays of Figaro,* could have written, in her hand.

It was hardly two o'clock, full an hour before his time, when a double knock was heard at the door; Mr. Turner's card was sent in, and a well-dressed and well-looking young man ushered into the presence of the fair poetess. There is no describing such an interview. My readers must imagine the compliments and the blushes, the fine speeches de part et d'autre, the long

* I speak, of course, of the admirably brilliant French comedies, and not of the operas, whether English or Italian, which retaining the situations, and hardly the situations, have completely sacrificed the wit, the character, and the pleasantry of the delightful originals, and have almost as much tended to injure Beaumarchais' reputation as his own dullest dramas.

words and the fine words, the sighings and the languishments. The lady was satisfied; the gentleman had no reason to complain; and after a short visit he left her, promising to return in the evening to take his coffee with her and her friend.

She had just sat down to express to that friend, in her accustomed high-flown language, the contentment of her heart, when another knock was followed by a second visiting ticket. "Mr Turner again! Oh! I suppose he has remembered something of consequence. Show him in."

And in came a *second* Mr. Turner!!

The consternation of the lady was inexpressible! That of the gentleman, when the reason of her astonishment was explained to him, was equally vehement and flattering. He burst into eloquent threats against the impostor who had assumed his name, the wretch who had dared to trifle with such a passion, and such a lady-love; and being equally well-looking and fine-spoken, full of rapturous vows and ardent protestations, and praise addressed equally to the woman and the authoress, conveyed to the enchanted Selina the complete idea of her lover-poet.

He took leave of her at the end of half an hour, to ascertain, if possible, the delinquent who had usurped his name and his assignation, purposing to return in the evening to meet her friend; and again she was sitting down to her writing table, to exclaim over this extraordinary adventure, and to dilate on the charms of the true Orlando, when three o'clock struck, and a third knock at the door heralded a third visiting ticket, and a *third* Mr. Turner!!!

A shy, awkward, simple youth, was this,—“the real Simon Pure!”—bowing and bashful, and with a stutter that would have rendered his words unintelligible even if time had been allowed him to bring them forth. But no time was allowed him. Provoked past her patience, believing herself the laughing-stock of the town, our sentimental fair one forgot her refinement, her delicacy, her fine speaking, and her affectation; and calling her maids and her footboy to aid, drove out her unfortunate

suitor with such a storm of vituperation, such a torrent of plain, honest, and homely scolding, that the luckless Orlando took to his heels, and missing his footing on the narrow bridge, tumbled, head-foremost, into the Holy Brook, and emerged dripping like a river god, to the infinite amusement of the two impostors and of William Marshall, the contriver of the jest, who lay perdu in the mill, and told the story, as a great secret, to so many persons, that before the next day it was known half over the place, and was the eventual cause of depriving the good town of Belford of one of the most inoffensive and most sentimental of its inhabitants. The fair Selina decamped in a week.

THE FIRST DAY OF TERM.

"Has anybody called upon me, this morning, Mrs. Brown?" inquired Mr. Launcelot Transit, a young gentleman of fashionable exterior, as he entered the breakfast parlour of his landlady, a middle-aged person of a puffy presence and an agreeable demeanour.

"Lord! no, sir!" replied Mrs. Brown, as she pounced upon the spout of the tea-urn, and gave her accustomed dip to the tea-cups—"who would think of calling upon you at this early hour, Mr. Transit?—no clandestine marriage on foot, eh, sir?—he, he, he," and the landlady indulged in a lodging-house giggle.

"Ha! ha!—oh! no, Mrs. Brown," and a sickly smile on the lodger's face died of a rapid decline. "I was thinking some one *might* have called—that's all."

There was a deep and unaccountable melancholy spread over Transit's commonly vivacious visage—his usually buoyant spirits had deserted him, and, as he hummed a dolorous cavatina, he might have been compared to a grig in grief, or a cricket chirping the dead march in Saul.

"And you have seen no one in the street since you rose, Mrs. Brown?" he resumed after a pause.

"That's more than I can say," answered the landlady, with a becoming reverence for truth. "I have seen three chimney-sweeps, five milkmen, several old clothesmen, an old woman with water-cresses, and I don't know how many servant girls opposite banging their mats against the street door steps—and a filthy dust they make. We shall presently have the pot-boy, I dare say; but you look peaking this morning, my dear sir, what's the matter?"

"I had a dream last night," muttered Transit, with an odious grimace. "I dreamt I was pursued by an alligator."

"An alligator, Mr. Transit; well, that *was* shocking—what sort of an animal was that?"

"It was dressed in top-boots, and had a Belcher handkerchief round its neck," said the dreamer.

"Only think of that, now," cried Mrs. Brown, as she leaned her hand upon her knee, and sputtered into a laugh like a damp skyrocket. "Really, Mr. Transit, you are the funniest man—"

"Was not that somebody at the door?" faltered Transit, starting like a guilty creature—but not "sitting at a play."

"I didn't hear a knock," said Mrs. Brown, "but what if there is—you are quite *nonsical* this morning, I declare,—but there certainly is," added the landlady, looking out of the window, "a man leaning against the lamp-post, waiting for somebody, I suppose."

Down went the Bohea with a splash into the lodger's saucer, while the tea-cup hung suspended from the tip of his forefinger, and a piece of dry toast stuck in his jaws like a pound of bran in the throat of Ugolino.

It was to be so—Transit knew it must be so. It was the first day of term. Messrs. Stitch and Stretch had advised him that, unless certain articles manufactured of sheep's wool were paid for before that day, a certain piece of sheep's skin should be issued forth to compel such payment. It was a bailiff.

"What kind of thing is it, Madam?" croaked the sufferer, at length.

"It's a man, sir," cried Mrs. Brown, calmly.

"What height?"

"A short, thick-set man."

"What face?"

"A red face, sir."

"What kind of eyes?"

"He squints, Mr. Transit; eyes like those of a picture—that always seem to be looking at you, and never are."

"Oh, yes—they are," groaned the lodger. "What has it on its head, Madam?"

"A broad-brimmed hat."

"Round its neck?"

"A coloured handkerchief."

"On its legs?"

"Top boots."

"In its hand?"

"A twisted crab-stick, with knots, like, in it."

With Tarquin's legs, and bent nearly double, like a master of the ceremonies with a cramp in the stomach, and with a face rendered the similitude still stronger, did Mr. Launce Transit evacuate the apartment, and crawling up stairs to his bed-room, locked himself in to enjoy the privacy of his own society.

It was necessary to reconnoitre this pest of human kind, and gingerly as an ostrich from its covert, did he protrude his head from the window to watch the proceedings of the being below. The wretch was whistling a vulgar tune, and leaning on his stick with the commendable patience of an experienced adept. Never did that tune strike on the tympanum of the lodger's ear with so grating a harshness—never, surely, was human creature so positively ugly and barbarously hideous as the person at the lamp-post. Yes; it was Fang, for his face was for a moment elevated, and his ill-assorted eyes were projected on a voyage of discovery, in different directions over the exterior of the house. "Son-of-bailiff, I know thee now." Transit knew him of old. It was Fang; the most active of sheriff's officers. Once before had his shoulder blade been paralysed by the torpedo touch of the reptile's antennæ—once before had he been liberated from his grasp by paternal affection—once—but no more was such protection to be extended to him. Down upon the bed he sunk in an agony of doubt, amazement, and fear.

But something must be done—a thought struck him, and he started from the bed. "Yes, I will call on little Dicky Spraggs, and borrow the money of him—he'll lend it me in a moment. I'm sure of it—a good little fellow that—I don't know a better fellow breathing than Dicky Spraggs—he certainly is a kind creature." But how to get out—the case was desperate and the idea of the practicability of escape darted through his brain. Dressing himself hastily, he decended to the kitchen, and from

thence deviated into the area, and crawling up the steps, after the manner of quadrupeds, brought his eye to a level with the railings. Fangs seemed fastened to the lamp-post, and was at this moment whistling the before-mentioned tune for the seventy-third time. But he was looking in another direction.

"Soft Pity enters through an iron gate,"

says Shakspeare; but Fangs was not soft pity, but hard cruelty; and softly, very softly, did Launcelot Transit open the iron gate, and squeezing himself through, swiftly, very swiftly, with three unnatural bounds did he clear the street, and glancing round the corner with a whisk to which lightning is mere laziness, was out of sight in a moment.

"Dicky, my boy," said he, with a miserable effort at gaiety, as he entered the parlour where good little Dicky Spraggs was enshrined in all the luxury of silk dressing-gown and velvet slippers; "I am come to borrow thirty pounds of you—an awkward trifle and it must be had."

"Then yon have just come to the wrong shop, my Launcelot," cried the eccentric Dicky, with his accustomed irresistible humour, "for the devil a mopus have I left," and he emptied the drawer of his writing desk upon the table, displaying an infinite number of broken wafers, rusty keys, and Havannah cigars—"you see how it is," and he gave a wink, and burst into what Launcelot could not but think a particularly ill-timed laugh.

"Well—but Spraggs," expostulated Transit, "Dicky, my friend, you have surely other funds that you could lay your finger upon to oblige me."

"Not a doit," answered Spraggs, whose principal employment of money at all times was to spend—and not to lend; and who had settled long ago, in his own mind, that Launcelot was never to touch a farthing of his—"I live at too great an expense to save money—now, these lodgings cost me three guineas a week."

"Indeed!" said the other, not heeding him.

"Yes, and not much neither," resumed Spraggs, "considering what a respectable look-out in front we enjoy here."

"A good look-out, certainly," sighed Launcelot, walking to the window. Had the wobegone Transit been shot through the brain with a ball of quicksilver, he could not have sprung with a more frantic leap from the window than he did at this instant.

"What's the matter," cried Spraggs, "are you ill, my dear fellow?"

"Nothing, nothing," gasped the victim; "it will soon go off—a sudden giddiness—St. Vitus's dance—I shall be better presently."

Yes, it was Fang—the indefatigable Fang, coiling round another lamp-post, and whistling another tune; and Transit's disturbed fancy depicted him in the act of climbing up the lamp-post, and stepping from its apex with outstretched hand into the parlour.

"Is the look-out equally agreeable from the back of these premises?" mumbled the invalid, when he had in some small measure recovered.

"Equally so," cried Spraggs, with an air of consequence. "We can see the park—fine view of the gay folks on a Sunday—charming spot."

"Well, if that's the case, I'll bid you good morning, Dicky," said his friend, a sudden bridge having been thrown over the chaos of his thoughts; "you are sure you can't lend me the money?" looking over his shoulder as he departed.

"No—'pon honour—no," but the door was shut with a crash, and Spraggs spared any further apology.

"You can't get out that way, sir,—the street door is in front," said a servant maid, as a figure was seen scrambling over the back wall.

"O yes, I can," bellowed Transit (for it was he), struggling and panting; "it's the nearest way into the park," and in a moment after the soles of his feet were upturned to the sun with strange rapidity, as he held his way over the greensward.

"What's to be done now," said the distracted debtor, as he sat himself down on the grass, and drew a long breath, while the deer came up and gazed with seeming astonishment at his forlorn appearance. "Hang me if I don't do an impudent thing for once, and borrow the

money of Miss Lavinia Lamprey—if I can. She loves me—that's certain, and must pay for the privilege. Ay, you may look, you locomotive venison," he added, with a satirical sneer, making a wry face at the deer as they bounded away from him, and starting to his feet—"but I'll get through this affair with triumph yet;" and he bent his hurried steps to Pimlico.

Miss Lavinia Lamprey was fortunately at home, but unhappily, with a caprice that characterizes ladies of a certain age, was just now disposed to look with aspect malign upon her lover.

"My dearest Lavinia, can't stop a moment—must be off—the strangest thing—I came out for the purpose of paying some money, and left it behind me—a paltry sum of thirty pounds—could you—"

"Sir," interrupted Miss Lavinia, opening her mouth like an absorbing fish, and her eyes elongating till they looked like notes of admiration. "Sir! what do you mean? thirty pounds—"

"My Lavinia!" cried the chap-fallen applicant, "am I then deceived in you? can mercenary motives like these interfere with your love—but no matter," and he tossed himself about the sofa in a fantastic manner.

Miss Lavinia smiled like an animal of the polar regions—so frozen was that smile—and then pursed up her lips—(the only purse Launcelot was doomed to behold)—but she was spared recrimination by the entrance of the servant.

"Captain Trigger, Madam, is waiting below."

"Captain Trigger!" fluttered Miss Lavinia Lamprey, with a blush of pleasure. "I'll wait upon him instantly; for you, sir," turning to the disconsolate Transit, "let me never see your face again; I have discovered your designs, sir—the girl will show you the door," and as she stalked from the room, a groan rent the earthly tabernacle of the debtor.

The heat of the room was oppressive and intolerable—all nature seemed shorn of it's beauty—Lavinia, false, cruel—a flirt—a coquette—a female curmudgeon—monstrous! The parrot swinging in its ring of wire, and prating its eternal well-learned lesson, was impertinent

—it was a cruel mockery. He attempted to thrust a paper of needles down its throat, but the bird, in its wisdom, seized his little finger with its beak, and bit him till he yelled with torture. The whining and snarling of the spaniel was offensive and insulting. He was overtaken by a sudden frenzy.

“Carlo, Carlo—come—come, pretty Carlo!” The cur advanced with a snappish eagerness. A kick from the distracted insolvent sent it spinning into the variegated curled paper of the fire-grate, and four strides down the staircase, and a leap into the street, and Transit left his Lavinia for ever!

As he turned out of Buckingham Gate, who is that confronts, and, with extended hand, would fain lay hold upon him? It is Fang, the ubiquitous, the ever-present Fang! It was instinct in convulsions, not premeditation, that prompted him to direct a blow at the stomach of the Bailiff; it was the same impulse that urged him to ply his legs towards Spring Gardens, and to leave the discomfited Fang rolling over and over in the stones intended for the new palace.

“And now I feel it’s all up with me,” said Transit, mournfully, as he gazed down the long vista of the Strand, “I cannot struggle against my fate. I have no other resource,—yes—one; I’ll go down to my uncle, and get the money out of him, in anticipation of my next remittance from my father; he’s a very respectable good sort of man that uncle of mine; he certainly has been a good friend to me:” and uttering these fond sayings, wherewith sanguine but despairing men are prone to propitiate fortune and their friends beforehand, he found himself at his uncle’s door.

“My dear uncle,” said Transit, as he was ushered into the room where

“An elderly gentleman sat
On the top of whose head was a wig—”

“I am come upon one of the most important affairs in life. I want money—thirty pounds—to be paid out of my half yearly remittance payable next month.”

Then thus outspoke the elderly gentleman, his mouth being raised like a portcullis, and descending upon the neck of every sentence, like a guillotine.

"Important affairs are of two qualities or descriptions, real or imaginary. Now, if your business be of the latter, that is to say, of an imaginary description of importance, I can have no hesitation in declining to do what you request; if, on the other hand, it be of a real weight, consequence, or necessity; then,—may I hope it is no imprudence of youth; no getting into debt; no arrest, or other inconvenient let, hindrance, or molestation." "Lord bless my soul! no, sir," cried Transit overjoyed, for he saw his deliverance at hand, "how could you suspect such a thing? The fact is,—but I don't like to mention these matters—a friend—a poor curate—eight children—starvation—meek-eyed charity—pleasures of benevolence—virtue its own reward—divide last farthing;" and as the speaker dropped these fragmentary sentences, two tears of genuine emotion rolled half way down his cheeks, which the joy of obtaining the money instantly drew up again into his eyes.

"Well, boy, well," whimpered the uncle, quelling a rebellious rising of sympathy in his throat, "these sentiments do you much honour; but beware, impostors are by far too common. Well, we must let you have the money;" and he began to write out a cheque for the amount.

Transit fixed a gaze upon each successive word that was written, as though he would draw the very ink out of the paper, but at that moment a servant entered the room.

"A gentleman in the back parlour wishes to speak to you, sir."

"Let him wait," cried Transit, in an agony of impatience.

"This is indecent haste," said the uncle in a tone of rebuke, "and I could fain chide you, and read to you a lesson of good breeding, or manners. What kind of gentleman, girl?"

"A person in top boots, sir."

Transit started; "but no, it could not be. Strange coincidence!" and he smiled faintly.

"What is the gentleman's name, child?" added the uncle.

"Mr. Fan—"

"Mr. Fang!" shrieked the nephew, as seized with panic, he darted from the premises.

"Mr. Fancourt, sir, come about the assessed taxes, he says." But Transit was gone. Enconced in the Bedford coffee house, he was brooding over his perplexities.

"Let me see, this is what I'll do," said he at length, drinking off the last glass of a pint of Madeira, "I've fairly escaped the rascal for to-day; I'll go to my lodgings, pack up a few things, start out of town till term ends, and—"

"Come with me, if you please," said a short man in top boots, belcher handkerchief, and with a knotted stick in his hand. It was Fang, the inevitable Fang!

"I am yours!" groaned the debtor, as they entered a hackney coach and drove off over one of the bridges!

OMEGA.

THE CAPTAIN.

I was sitting in the Coffee-room of an Inn at Hastings, enjoying the cool sea-breeze and a pint of Madeira, when the entrance of a stranger dissipated the short reverie into which I had fallen. "Waiter," quoth he, as he walked up the room, "the coach starts at nine precisely, and, therefore, my fine fellow, you must please to give me notice of its arrival, for if I should, by any chance, be disappointed—beware revenge! Better you had never breathed this vital air than answer my fell wrath." The waiter departed with an incredulous smirk, and the stranger, who had uttered the above fearful threat with the cool unconcern of an oracular presence, began to hum an air and to arrange his neckcloth at the glass; the swell of such air being augmented or diminished exactly in accordance with the folds and windings of the cravat, and terminating in a graceful shake on the completion of that arrangement.

During this short period, however, I had been strictly scrutinizing the appearance of this mysterious person. He was a man somewhat below the ordinary size, and apparently between forty and fifty years of age. His face was of a copper complexion, and garnished with a pair of exaggerated whiskers, which, like his redundant head of hair, seemed to have sustained some injury in an escape from recent and devouring flames. There was a singed aridity in both, as of a blighted furze bush. His eyes had all the restless activity of bullets, and his promontory of a chin was sustained by the neckcloth above-mentioned, which meandered round his neck in an infinite multiplicity of windings, and at length fell down over his waistcoat with all the prodigality of a cataract.

While I was thus engaged in examining this strange being, he approached, and, offering me his snuff-box with

much courtesousness, took a seat at the same table. "Charming view of the sea," said he, "splendid prospect—ocean, ocean—nothing like ocean; what does the poet say—splendid poet, Byron?—what says he of ocean? Let me see, he likens it—to a horse, is it? No—yes—to a horse, certainly; says he, 'I'll lay my hand upon thy mane'—glorious burst that—as though it were the mane of a horse, you perceive—'I'll lay my hand upon thy mane.'" Here he attempted to describe the action by clenching one hand upon the table in a convulsive manner, while he snatched an enormous pinch of snuff with the other.

As I was not a little amused by this original, I rather encouraged than repulsed his advances towards conversation—an encouragement not at all necessary; for I found, ere long, that the main difficulty would be to impede his progress; and my endeavours to stem the current of his discourse were as vain as those of one who should attempt to turn the course of a cannon-ball with a bodkin, or to blow against the falls of Niagara.

"You are drinking Madeira, I perceive," he remarked, "I shall be happy to join you, not that I drink much now-a-days. I have abjured it long ago, ever since my last duel. You must have read the account of it in the papers—Trigger and Storks? No? I'll tell you how it occurred. It was after dinner at the mess, one evening; the wine had circulated pretty freely, and there was a great deal of conversation. Lieut. Storks, amongst others, was violent—rampant, as I may say, in his conversation. He was always a fiery little fellow—fine fellow, though—but extremely absurd—ignorant, wofully ignorant. He would have it, that Virgil was a Latin poet, and that Galileo was not a Swede; and went so far, upon my attempting to set him right on these points, as to call me a presumptuous and ignorant coxcomb. You inquire, I perceive, what I did upon this provocation? Threw the contents of my wine-glass into his face; that was all—I give you my word.

"The next morning, Major Fireball burst into my room, and shaking me by the shoulder vociferated—'Trigger, you must fight. Honour calls.' 'Fight, my

dear fellow,' said I, starting up in bed, 'fight? fight for what, with whom?' No apology received—never make apologies in the army—compelled to fight a man who could take off a pin's head at twenty paces,"

"Well, Sir, you went out, of course?"

"Went out, Sir, of course; and winged him, Sir—winged him, by Heaven."

"How, Captain, then he fired in the air?"

"Fired in the *hair*, rather, my dear boy, ha! ha! shaved off my left whisker, I assure you. Do you know, there is one thing I never could avoid doing. I did it in this same business with Storks. I have heard some of our old fighting colonels and majors laugh at the notion; but I assert, Sir, that no man ever feels a bullet whizzing past him but he bobs, Sir, he bobs. When I first went into a field of battle, I stuck my head firmly between my shoulders, and said I to myself, Hang me if I *do* bob; but I could not help it—no man can help it. You hear a ball spinning past you on the left—you bob—thus;—another comes whizzing on the right—you bob—so:—must bob—depend upon it."

I thought this a favourable opportunity of expatiating on the Captain's courage, more especially exemplified, I thought, in the modesty with which he detailed his exploits; and the frank avowal he had made of his bobbing propensity.

"Courage, my dear fellow, courage," he interposed, "is of two qualities, negative and positive—and of two descriptions, animal and moral. I enjoy both in-perfection. Now, I'll tell you a circumstance that does not seem, at first sight, to reflect much credit on my courage—my animal courage: but mark the moral intrepidity—pray discover the noble bravery—a contempt of custom. You must know, Sir, I was at one time paying certain little delicate attentions to a young lady—fine girl—noble creature—with as pretty a four hundred a year as man could desire to see in a quarterly course of payment. Well, Sir, there was another—a hated rival—countenanced by the mother, a venomous old basilisk, killing to look upon—you know the sort of person I speak of. In the mean time I was creating an interest in the right

quarter—mark me—making the post-office echo with my sighs, and casting sheep's eyes out of a calf's head, as the poet says, ha! ha! This, of course, was gall and wormwood to my rival, but honey and treacle to me. Now, Sir, to the point at once. We came to high words, and what do you think he did?"

"I cannot possibly say."

"But guess."

"Cannot conceive."

"He kicked me, Sir; kicked me down stairs, out of the house, with anything but a light, although a fantastic toe."

"Kicked you! my dear Sir, but surely—"

"I bore it," interrupted the Captain; "I bore it with heroic fortitude,"—rubbing his chin with much complacency.

"But you demanded satisfaction afterwards, no doubt; nothing but blood could expiate—"

"Pish! my dear Sir, I see you know nothing of the laws of honour. Do you think I could consent to meet a man who would be guilty of kicking a gentleman down stairs. My dear Sir!—only reflect—don't you see it would be impossible to put such a man upon a level? Don't you see the thing at once?"

While I was debating this point within myself—in which, sooth to say, I discovered more discretion and common sense than madness and courage—and was inclined to rank the Captain rather as a philosopher than a hero, he burst out again.

"Talking of kicking reminds me of a strange adventure—ha! ha! I shall never forget it. The landlord of the house where I once lodged—furnished apartments, first floor, all that sort of thing—was discoursing one night of ghosts, and expressing a superstitious dread of those mushroom species of mockery—which I firmly believe to be the shadows of the dead rambling about to divert ennui, seeing that their owners have no longer any occasion for them;—well, Sir, his wife, a wicked jade, full of spirits, gay as a lark, was pleased to doubt my courage in these matters, whereas, Sir, I despise the thing altogether. I have seen hundreds of them, of all

sizes, ever since the wound in my head at Badajos—a large assortment of them, I say, ghosts and ghostlings, sprites and spectres. Two or three nights after this, I was awakened by a slight noise. I listened; all dark, all still; presently the door opens, in steps a terrific figure, head blue as a pill: in short a stick of locomotive starch. I had my snuff-box in my hand—can't do without a pinch of snuff in the night, aimed it at his blue pill of a head, knocked out his eye, egad—not particular to *a shade*; sprang out of bed, gave it a kick, over the banisters it went, and was found on the mat at the foot of the stairs in ruins."

"But, Captain, you alarm me; what was this creature?"

"Oh! my dear Sir, all right. The people of the house picked it up, and it turned out to be the landlord. Three months before they got him into decent repair again. Fatal speculation in unprofitable schemes! The absurd fellow had been instigated by his wife to the experiment, and was nearly sent to the other world for his pains, to set up ghost on his own account—ha! ha! ha!"

"But we military men," said the Captain, altering his tone to a mournful and deprecating cadence; "we are subject to a great many annoyances and vexations, of which the great mass of society is unconscious; and, indeed, I believe it to be pretty generally the case with us fellows of frolic and wit, who are formed for the delight of mankind; they won't let us do as we please by any means, and the consequence is, we please nobody. Now, your poets"—(I shuddered, for I, too, am of the tuneful throng!) "ill used creatures, those poets; they usually sing in cages, I fear—those muses, the three times three of poets without wine, are most economical ladies, and give very little away; and the bard who sits down in anticipation of a bay leaf, egad, has much more cause to expect a bailiff. Just so with me. Now, I am cooped with a most insufficient stipend, a most iniquitous income—what's to be said? My half pay does not suffice to pay anything at all; I mean that a man on half pay should only be expected to pay half; what do you say

to that? I'll tell you, Sir, an expedient of mine—wonderful sagacity—the most perfect presence of mind perhaps ever exhibited. I had been long obtruded upon by duns; a kind of periodical pestilence with which I am afflicted—until, at length, the vehemence of the disorder settled itself down into a confirmed brace of bailiffs, who kept watch opposite my house all day long. What do I do, think you? The street door of my next neighbour is a bright yellow—I steal out in the night and paint it all over a dark green, the colour of my own. What is the use of that, you ask?—this, Sir, this. The next morning comes the bailiff—i' faith, Sir, keeps a sharp eye on my neighbour's door, and actually lays his electric paw upon the owner—a bank-clerk proceeding into the city: and in spite of shrieks and asseverations bears him away from his domestic circle, of which he was so brilliant a segment; while I march off to my agent, receive my pay, and start into the country without beat of drum."

"Excellent, indeed, Captain, a most excellent device; but, tell me—why could'nt you have made your escape during the night, without the necessity of the painting process?"

"Oh! my dear friend, it was not convenient, you know—not convenient. By the by, I met my friend the bank-clerk a short time ago."

"Indeed? what did he say to the trick you had practised upon him?"

"Nothing—nothing in the world: he merely told me never to '*darken his doors*' again—ha! ha! ha!"

"Your philosophy, I perceive, Sir," said I, "seems to be almost on a par with the fertility of your invention. You are evidently a man of vast mental resources; nothing appears to daunt or to depress you. You have dipped, come now, confess it, you have imbibed golden maxims of prudence and conduct from the ancient philosophers?"

"Hang the ancient philosophers," quoth the captain, "a fig for the ancient philosophy—everything I do is unpremeditated; everything I do is the result of

'A plain heroic magnitude of mind.'

as the poet says. I don't like those fellows who study philosophy. I remember a friend of mine once invited me to spend a few days with him in the country. Well, Sir, this person was a philosopher, 'a modern Pythagorean,' he called himself—believed in the transmigration of souls, and all that. It was the shooting season. I walked out one morning with my gun—brought home a pheasant—fine bird as ever I saw in my days. A tremendous uproar took place when I entered the hall with the bird in my fingers. Would you believe it?—the fellow insisted upon it that I had brought down his grandmother! pshaw! don't tell me a word about philosophy after that. Ha! ha! ha!"

At this moment, to my great relief—for the wine he had drunk was evidently mounting into the Captain's head—the waiter entered, and gave him to understand that the coach was at the door.

"Say you so," shouted the Captain, flinging the remaining wine down his throat, "then I'll go and besiege the roof of it forthwith. Good night, my dear fellow," seizing me by the hand, "come and see me in London; Captain Trigger—one of the best fellows in the world—Artichoke, Covent Garden; a glorious knot of us meet there o' nights—don't forget."

And away went the Captain, leaving me to the vainly uttered wish, that my pen-and-ink powers of outline were, if only for this occasion, comparable with the burin of Retsch—so should the reader be presented with the breathing portraiture of one whose full developement might task the powers of a Jonson or a Fletcher.

OMEGA.

YOU CAN'T MARRY YOUR GRANDMOTHER!

BY T. HAYNES BAYLY, ESQ.

THE most wretched of children is the spoiled child—the pet who is under no subjection, and who gets all the trash for which his little mouth waters. 'Tis he who bumps his head, in the act of going somewhere he was forbidden by papa to approach; and 'tis he whose little stomach aches considerably in consequence of eating too many sweet things, coaxed out of the cupboard of a fond but injudicious mamma.

Spoil the boy, and what are we to expect of the man? Will the dog be well behaved, which was let to go his own way when a puppy? Will the steed be steady in harness, if, when a colt, no care was taken of it. The spoiled boy inevitably becomes the wilful man, and with the wilfulness comes discontent.

Unfortunately, those who have always been accustomed to find others yield to them, and to have their own way, become habitually selfish, and utterly regardless of the feelings and wishes of those about them. Self-gratification is naturally the first wish of the child; but it is the fault of parents, if, by injudicious indulgence, the man is led to anticipate that, as everybody yielded to him in boyhood, everybody must yield in after-life.

Frederick Fairleigh was the spoiled child of his family, the youngest of three children, and the only boy. He was the pet of both father and mother, and being lively, intelligent and good-looking, he soon became a favourite. Spoiled in infancy, he was unmanageable in boyhood, and wilful and self-sufficient in the early days of maturity. Master Frederick having been used to his own way, it was not likely that Mr. Frederick would voluntarily relinquish so agreeable a privilege. At college, therefore he continued and matured the habit of

idleness, which had been censured, but never sufficiently corrected at school.

"As for study, he never got further than stud," and was much more frequently seen in a scarlet hunting-coat than in his sombre academic costume. The idle man at Oxford during term-time is not likely to do much good at home during the vacation.—Frederick Fairleigh did none. Ere he ceased to be in years a boy, he became what is termed a "lady's man," flirting with all the pretty girls he met, and encouraged to flirt by many a married dame old enough to be his mother. Petted and spoiled by everybody, Frederick became the especial favourite of his grandfather, Sir Peter Fairleigh, and spent much more of his time at Oakley Park than at his father's house.

Before young Fairleigh was one-and twenty his father died, and being then the immediate heir to Sir Peter's baronetcy and estates, he naturally became a greater favourite than ever. One precept the old gentleman was perpetually preaching to his grandson: he advocated an early marriage, and the more evidently the youth fluttered butterfly fashion, from flower to flower, enjoying the present without a thought of the future, the more strenuously did old Sir Peter urge the point.

The spoiled child had no notion of relinquishing old privileges: he still had his own way, still flirted with all the pretty girls in the neighbourhood, and thinking only of himself, and the enjoyment of the moment, never dreamt of the pain he might inflict on some, who, viewing his attentions in a serious light, might keenly suffer in secret when they saw those attentions transferred to another.

He was five-and-twenty when he first met Maria Denman, the richest heiress and the prettiest girl of the country; and when the old Baronet saw the handsome pair rambling together all the morning, and sitting together in corners at night, he secretly exulted in the probable realisation of one of his fondest hopes—the union of his pet grandson with his fair favourite, Maria. There could be no misunderstanding his intentions: there was indeed a tacit understanding between the

young couple; but Frederick Fairleigh certainly never had in so many words distinctly said, "Maria, will you marry me?" Months flew away, two years had already elapsed, and though Frederick certainly seemed attached to Maria, yet, when other pretty people came in his way, he still flirted in a manner not quite justifiable in one who had a serious attachment, nay almost an engagement, elsewhere.

Poor Sir Peter did not manage matters well; indeed, with the best intentions in the world, he made them worse. It was not likely that one who had never been accustomed to opposition should all at once obey the dictation of a grandfather. Opposition to the match would immediately have brought matters to the desired point—for Frederick, though not quite aware of it himself, devotedly loved the fair Maria. But she, like the rest of the world, had assisted to spoil him: she had been too accessible, too easily won; and really loving him who had paid her such marked attention, Frederick had never seen a look or a word bestowed upon another which could give him the slightest uneasiness. A pang of jealousy would probably have at once opened his eyes to the state of his own heart. But always kindly received by Maria, and always happy in her society, the spoiled child saw in her kindness, and in her smiles, nothing beyond the voluntary and unsolicited preference which he had been but too well accustomed to receive from others. He was, therefore, never driven by doubt or by solicitude to pause and scrutinize the state of his own heart.

Instead of offering feigned opposition to the match, however, Sir Peter openly opposed the line of conduct pursued by his volatile heir, and, by continually harping on the subject, he at last really made the wilful young man believe that, of all disagreeable things in the world, a marriage with the woman who was really dearest to him of all beings on earth, would be the very worst.

"My dear Sir," he cried one morning, at breakfast, after hearing a long lecture on the subject, "how you do tease me about Miss Denman!"

"Tease you, Fred," said Sir Peter, "tease you! for shame: I am urging you to secure your own happiness."

"Surely, Sir," he replied, "there is plenty of time,—I am still very young."

"Young, Sir!—you are a boy, Sir; a boy in judgment and discretion; a very child, Sir; and, and what's worse, a spoiled child."

"Well," said Frederick, laughing, "don't be angry; if I am a spoiled child the fault is not mine."

"Yes it is, Fred—I say it is, things that are really good of their kind are not so easily spoiled."

"Indeed!" said Frederick, with a look of innocent surprise, and, taking up Sir Peter's gold watch which lay upon the table, he opened it, and pretended to poke about the wheels.

"I see what you mean, you satirical monkey," cried Sir Peter, laughing; "give me my watch, Sir, and let me now tell you that where there is real good sense and stability, the man will very soon learn to get rid of the selfishness—yes, Fred, I am sorry to repeat it, selfishness was my word—the selfishness and self-importance, resulting from over indulgence in childhood."

"I wonder then any one should care about a selfish consequential fellow, like myself," said Frederick.

"You mean to insinuate that you have been and are a general favourite, popular with everybody, and well received wherever you go? I grant it, my dear boy, I grant it,—and I should be the last person to say that I wonder at it; but then you have got into one or two scrapes lately."

"How do you mean?" said his grandson "when and where?"

"Why, for instance, the Simmonses, with whom you were so intimate; did not Mr. Simmons ask you rather an awkward question the last time you were there?"

"He asked me my intentions," said Frederick, "my views with respect to his eldest daughter, Caroline—he inquired, in fact, if I was serious."

"A puzzler that, hey, Fred!" chuckled the baronet, who was not sorry the occurrence had happened.

"It was awkward, certainly," said the youth, "but

how could I help it? They invariably encouraged me to go to the house and I positively never was more attentive to one daughter than to another."

"Possibly not; but depend on it where there are young unmarried daughters in a family, fathers and mothers never receive the constant visits of a young man without calculating probabilities, and looking to consequences. However, for Susan Simmons I care not three straws; I am only anxious that a similar occurrence should not deprive you of Miss Denman's society."

"That is a very different affair, Sir," said Frederick; "surely you would not compare Susan Simmons with Maria?"

"Ah!" said the old man, "that delights me; now you are coming to the point, the other was a mere flirtation—all your former fancies have been mere flirtations; but with Maria (as you say) it is different; you really love her, she is the woman you select for a wife."

"I did not say any such thing: I have not thought of marriage, I am too young, too unsteady, if you will."

"Unsteady enough, I admit," said Sir Peter, shrugging his shoulders, "but by no means too young; besides, your father being dead, and your mother having made a second marriage, your home as a married man will be so desirable for your sisters."

"I wonder you never married again, Sir," said Frederick.

"You would not wonder," said Sir Peter feelingly, "had you witnessed my happiness with the woman I loved; never tell me that taking a second wife is complimentary to the first. It is a tacid eulogium on the marriage state, I grant you; but I consider it anything rather than a compliment to the individual in whose place you put a successor. They who have loved and who have been beloved like myself, cannot imagine the possibility of meeting with similar happiness in a second union. Plead the passions if you will as an apology for second marriages, but never talk of the affections; at least never name the last and the happiness you enjoyed in her society, as a reason why you lead a second bride by the

tombstone of your first, and vow at the altar to love and to cherish her."

"Why, my dear Sir, can there be any harm in a man's marrying a second wife?"

"Not a bit of it; I am speaking of it as a matter of feeling, not of duty; in fact, I only give you my own individual feelings, without a notion of censuring others. But were I about to marry, Maria Denman is the woman I should choose."

"I wish you would then, my dear Sir," said Frederick carelessly, "for then I might enjoy her society without the dread of being talked into a marriage." With these words he left the room, and Sir Peter cogitated most uncomfortably over the unsatisfactory result of the conversation.

The next day Frederick Fairleigh was off to some races which were held in the neighbourhood, and as if to show a laudable spirit, and to prove that he was master of his own actions, he avoided Maria Denman as much as possible, and flirted with a new acquaintance—the beautiful widow of an officer.

Sir Peter was in despair; Maria, who was an orphan, and had been entrusted to his guardianship, was on a visit to Oakley Park, and in her pensive countenance and abstracted manner he plainly saw that his ward was really attached to Frederick, and was hurt and distressed by his extraordinary conduct.

"I wish our Frederick would come home," said Sir Peter, who had been watching his ward, while she diligently finished a cat's left whisker, in a worsted work-stool which was fixed in her embroidery frame.

"Our Frederick!" said Maria, starting.

"Yes, my dear, our Frederick; did you not know he was in love with you?"

"I hope I am not apt to fancy young men are in love with me, Sir Peter, and certainly Mr. Fairleigh has never given me any reason to——"

"Stop, stop, no fibs," said the Baronet.

"He has never told me that a——" Maria hesitated.

"He has never formally proposed for you;—is that what you mean to say?"

"Decidedly."

"And never will, if we don't make him; but do you mean to say that he has never given you reason to suppose that he loved you?"

"Pray, my dear guardian," said Maria, evading a direct reply, "look at your grandson; you must be aware that his attentions are lavished indiscriminately on every young lady he gets acquainted with. Words and looks that might be seriously interpreted with others, evidently mean nothing with him. He—he gives it out that he is not a marrying man."

"Not a marrying man! how I hate that phrase! No man's a marrying man till he meets with the woman that he wishes to marry. And if men are not marrying men, I'd be glad to know what they are?—a pack of reprobate rogues! As to Frederick I'm determined——"

"Pray make no rash resolves respecting your grandson, Sir Peter—especially in any matter in which you may think I am concerned."

"I tell you what, Maria, I know you love him," said Sir Peter. "I see his attentions have won your heart. You have been, and are, quite right to endeavour to hide your feelings, but it is all in vain; I see as plain as possible that you are dying for the ungrateful, foolish, abominable fellow."

"Oh, Sir!" cried Maria, rising in confusion, but she again sank into her chair, and covering her face with her hands, burst into tears.

"Do not think me cruel and unkind, Maria," said the old gentleman, seating himself by her side and taking her hand; "you are very dear to me, you and my grandson are the two beings on earth who engross my affections; and, believe me, Frederick devotedly loves you."

Maria shook her head, and continued weeping.

Many weeks had elapsed, and young Fairleigh was still absent from Oakley Park. Maria had, however, resumed her cheerfulness, and Sir Peter seemed less annoyed than might have been expected at his grandson's evident determination not to follow his advice. To account for this change we must state, that Sir Peter, having accidentally been obliged to search for some book

in Frederick's apartment, had discovered several matters that convinced him of his attachment to his ward, and those presumptive proofs having been made known to Maria, she had made a full confession of the state of her heart. A print, which when exhibited in a portfolio in the drawing-room had been pronounced a perfect resemblance of the then absent Maria, had been secretly taken from the portfolio, and was now discovered in Frederick's room. By its side was a withered nosegay, which Maria recognised as one that she had gathered and given to him; and in the same place was found a copy of verses addressed "To Maria," and breathing forth a lover's fondest vows.

All this amounted to nothing as proofs that Frederick Fairleigh was in duty bound to marry the said Maria Denman. In a court of justice no jury would have adjudged damages, in a suit for breach of promise of marriage, on such trivial grounds as these; but they served to show Maria that he who had thus treasured up her resemblance could not be altogether indifferent to her, and she at least felt relieved from the humiliating idea that she loved one who had never for a moment thought seriously about her.

Sir Peter and his ward were now often closeted together, and one day, after an unusually long discussion, she said,

"Well, Sir Peter, I can say no more; I consent."

"There's a dear good girl!" cried the old man, affectionately kissing her, "and now we'll all be happy in spite of him. But now for my plans. It will never do to stay here at Oakley Park with all these servants to wonder and chatter; no, no. To-morrow you and I, and your maid and my confidential man, will go to Bognor, the quietest place in the world, and we'll have nice lodgings near the sea, and I'll write to that miserable boy to come and meet us."

Maria looked rather grave, but Sir Peter, chuckling with delight, gave her another kiss, and then went to expedite their departure, and to write a letter to his grandson.

Fairleigh, who had begun to get very tired of the fas-

cinating widow, was yawning over a late breakfast when his grandfather's letter was laid before him.

"Ah," thought he, "more good advice, I suppose, urging me to marry. One thing at all events I'm resolved on, never to marry a widow: if people would but let me alone, really Maria after all is ——but what says the Baronet?"

"MY DEAR GRANDSON,

"Finding that all my good advice has been thrown away, and at length perceiving that you never intend to invite me to your wedding, I now write to announce my own, and request you with all speed to hasten to Bognor, where we are established at Beach Cottage, and where nothing but your presence is wanting to complete the happiness of your affectionate grandfather,

"PETER FAIRLEIGH."

"Astonishing! of all men in the wide world the very last!" Well, there was no use in wondering; Frederick hastily packed up, and was very shortly on his way to Bognor to pay his respects to the new-married couple. On inquiring for "Beach Cottage," he was directed to a picturesque abode, the very beau ideal of a house to "honey-moon" in; and he was immediately ushered into the presence of the Baronet, who was sitting alone in a charming apartment which looked upon the sea.

The meeting occasioned some little awkwardness on both sides, and it was a relief to Frederick when Sir Peter rose to leave the room, saying, "there is a lady who will expect to be made acquainted with you."

"Yes, Sir," said Frederick, "pray permit me to pay my respects—to—to ask her blessing; pray, Sir, present me to—my grandmother."

Sir Peter left the room, and Frederick, half inclined to view the marriage in a ridiculous light, sat wondering what sort of old body could have been fool enough to enter the married state so late in life. He heard a foot-step slowly approach the room, (rather decrepid, thought

he); a hand touched the lock of the door; it opened; and Maria stood before him clothed in white.

She advanced towards him with a smile, held out her hand, and welcomed him to Beach Cottage.

"Good heavens!" cried Frederick, sinking on the sofa, and turning as pale as a sheet, is it possible! I—I deserve this—fool, idiot, madman that I have been; but oh! Maria, how could you consent to such a sacrifice? You must have known, you must have seen my attachment. Yet, no, no, I have no right to complain, I alone have been to blame!"

Sir Peter had followed the young lady into the room; she hastily retreated to the window, and the Baronet in apparent amazement addressed his grandson.

"What means this language addressed to that lady, Sir; a lady you avoided when I wished you to address her, and now that she is lost to you for ever, you insult her by a declaration of attachment!"

"Sir Peter," said the spoiled child, springing from the sofa, "if you were not my father's father I'd—"

"Well, what would you do, young man?"

"But you are!" cried Frederick, "you are, and what avails expostulation," and he sank again on the sofa choking with agitation.

"Pray, young man," said Sir Peter, "control your emotions, and as to rage, don't give way to it—were you to kill me, you could not marry my widow."

"Not marry her—could not, were she free!" cried Frederick, as the utter hopelessness of the case flashed upon him.

"No, my dear boy, no, not even if she were free."

"I would!" shouted the youth.

"Impossible! if I were in my grave, you couldn't."

"I could! I would! I will!" cried Frederick.

"What! marry your grandmother!"

"Yes!" said Fairleigh, clenching his fists, and almost foaming at the mouth, "yes, I repeat it, yes!"

It was impossible to hold out any longer. Sir Peter and Maria burst into immoderate laughter, which only increased the agitation of the sufferer, until Sir Peter wiping his eyes said,

"Go to her, boy, go to her; my plan has answered, as I thought it would, and you will be a happy fellow in spite of your folly."

Maria earnestly impressed upon her lover's mind that she had most reluctantly yielded to the persuasions of her guardian, in suffering this little drama to be got up for his edification; and Frederick having now experienced the anguish which he would have endured had he really lost Maria, proved by his steady devotion the strength of his attachment. "Beach Cottage" was retained as the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Fairleigh during the honey-moon, and Sir Peter danced at their wedding.

THE LIFE-BOAT.

ON the shore between Yarmouth and Lowestoff the sea has occasionally done great damage. No part of the British coast is more dangerous; and those towns, especially the latter, have at different times suffered severely from tempests. At Lowestoff there were formerly two chapels, one of which has been entirely carried away by the sea, and other portions of the town have sustained damage by the tremendous hurricanes which sometimes blow upon this part of the island. On the north side of Lowestoff stands the Upper Light-house, a building forty feet high and twenty feet in diameter. On the beach below the cliff another light-house has been erected of timber, for the more immediate advantage of the fishing-boats. Not far from the shore, and parallel with it, are several dangerous banks, upon which wrecks frequently occur in stormy weather; and it is quite endearing to humanity to see with what alacrity and fearlessness of all personal danger the boatmen put off to crews in distress, when one would imagine no boat could live a moment in the fiercely convulsed ocean. They hazard their lives with a noble disinterestedness worthy of the highest admiration.

Hundreds of lives are yearly saved by the personal intrepidity of the Yarmouth and Lowestoff boatmen, who, from passing the best portion of their days upon the water in the pursuit of their occupation of fishing, naturally acquire a skill in the management of their boats in tempestuous weather, not surpassed by the boatmen upon any part of the English coast. I have often wondered alike at their boldness and at their success.

It is a beautiful thing to witness the great result of the magnanimity of human endeavour in the salvation of human life. The calm intrepidity with which men launch their little barks into the tempestuous ocean, with the furious threatenings of death in their ears, and the

mightiest perils before their eyes, above and around them, raises a stirring interest in the mind of the beholder. It awakens within us the slumbering but active principles of love for our fellow-beings, and shows us that in human nature there is yet that likeness to the divine, obscured indeed, but not extinguished, which shall finally raise it to the everlasting inheritance reserved for it and the good of all countries, of all races, and of all conditions. How has it been vilified by the cold and selfish philosophy of those who refer, for their judgment of it, to their own bosoms, and who have never put themselves in the way where they may behold the exercise of its beautiful and heavenly sympathies!

One afternoon in the month of March I was passing between Yarmouth and Lowestoff, when my attention was particularly arrested by the violence of the breakers dashing over one of the banks, so dangerously prevalent upon this part of the coast. The wind was high, but not boisterous, though the aspect of the weather, even to an unpractised eye, was anything but favourable. I stood and gazed upon the distant shoal with that painful feeling which sudden associations of danger naturally awaken.

I could not help reflecting how many unhappy creatures had found a grave beneath the waters which covered it, and of how many it was still likely to prove the destruction. My reflections were melancholy in the extreme, and this was heightened by the rising wind, which now began to increase perceptibly. The gusts were not only more frequent, but louder and more continuous. The sea was becoming gradually ruffled, and the foam was gathering upon the crest of every billow. The breakers whitened more and more as they rolled their heavy masses over the bank which had been the cause of so many fatal wrecks.

As I proceeded homeward, I observed the clouds gathering fearfully. The sun glared through their uneven sections as they rapidly passed, at first in thin fleecy masses, over his broad radiating orb. Though still high in the heavens, his beams seemed to send no heat upon the earth: I felt chilled and dull. A mysterious gloom appeared to lurk insidiously under the stream of florid light which the

sun, when released from his temporary bondage of clouds, poured upon every object. A sort of unnatural dreariness surrounded me which I could not explain; it was not positively visible; but it was felt. I walked hurriedly on. The wind boomed loudly, and the clouds began to collect in deeper black. At length I reached my home, which was one of a disjointed group of houses near the beach.

As the evening advanced, the storm increased with great rapidity and with equal violence. I placed myself at the window, and watched the chafing waters. They were already white with continual collision. How I shuddered as I heard the first harsh moan of the wind, which rapidly rose and roared over the sea with the voice and threatening of omnipotent terror! The waters seemed to leap up to meet its rude embrace, from which they immediately shrank with a fierce recoil, as if driven back by some mysterious but almighty repulsion. By this time the sun's sphere glared luridly through the brief intervals into which the clouds occasionally broke as they careered swiftly over it. Their skirts reflected his beams as he went down behind the distant hills.

The impenetrable masses of vapour which by this time had overspread the sky, produced a premature and supernatural darkness. The golden fringes with which the setting sun had adorned them, presented a singular contrast with the deep, varying tints, which they were perpetually assuming as they evolved their vast but fantastic shapes over the heavens, and unfurled their huge wings like the monstrous fictions of our dreams, or the no less monstrous creations of fabulous story.

I looked out upon the sea. In a few hours it had swelled from a state of gentle undulation to one of appalling disorder, like a monster writhing in its agony, presenting a surface of intractable commotion, and replying to the roar of the elements with a voice of threatening that made the beholder tremble. It was in truth a sublime spectacle, but one upon which terror exercised all its attributes.

By the time the sun had sunk below the horizon, it was blowing a hurricane, and the agitation of the waters

was increasing every moment. The fishing-boats made for the shore with all speed, and were hauled upon the beach by the wives and children of the whose safety had already become a subject of painful anxiety. The sea rolled upon the shore with frightful violence, and, where there was an opposing rock, dashed against it with a force which threatened to subvert it, carrying a sheet of spray to the very skies, and flinging it over the land like a vast shroud upheaved from the billows, where the minister of death appeared preparing to enter upon his mission of devastation.

When evening set in the tempest had nearly reached its climax. Nothing could exceed its portentous fury. The mind was filled with images of disaster and of death. The darkness was so intense that nothing was to be seen but the frothy surface of the sea, illuminated by its own phosphorescence, and gleaming through the blackness of the thickened atmosphere like a spectre of gigantic proportions heaving its huge body from a disturbed repose, and labouring under the throes of some supernatural convulsion.

I went to bed with a singular oppression of spirits, but could not sleep. The howling of the wind and the sullen booming of the waters forced upon my mind reflections of the most painful description. I thought of those unhappy creatures at that moment upon the agitated ocean, struggling in a little bark amid a world of waters excited to that pitch of commotion which yields no hope of safety to the hapless seafarer. The very house in which I lay, rocked under the fierce concussion of the elements.

Shortly after midnight, the impetuosity of the wind subsided, and I slept. I arose early. There was a thick heavy mist upon the sea; it was so dense that the eye could not pierce it. The sun's orb was alone visible through the thick vapour; it seemed like a huge iron ball heated red hot and poised in the centre of the stagnant fog, which appeared to sustain it by some supernatural agency. It looked as if suspended from the sky, having declined from its orbit, and so near that it might have been struck by a musket-ball. The effect was sin-

gular, but painful. There was something altogether ominous in this strange aspect.

As the morning advanced the wind again rapidly rose, and dispersed the mist; clouds once more gathered over the sun, and before noon the tempest raged as fiercely as on the preceding evening. As soon as objects in the distance became visible, it was perceived that a ship had run upon the furthest and most dangerous shoal. She lay quite upon her beam ends, without a sail set, and the sea dashing over her hull with frightful impetuosity. It was evident that she could not long withstand such a terrible assault. Through a glass, the crew were seen clinging to the wreck in a state of agonising distress. The rigging of the vessel was in the greatest disorder, as if it had suffered extremely from the hurricane of the previous night. The sails had been furled, but hung in bags from the masts. It became manifest at the first glance that there was no hope of saving the ship, and that great peril must be incurred in attempting to rescue the crew. This, however, was determined upon the moment their danger was ascertained.

For contingencies like the present, a life-boat had been built at Lowestoff, upon a new and singularly safe construction. It was capable of containing eighty persons. The whole of the outside was faced with cork, which projected from the wood to a thickness of at least four inches. The outer surface of the cork was covered with tarpaulin well secured, and the whole protected by a thick coat of white lead. This preparation not only rendered the boat so buoyant as to secure her against upsetting, but, should she strike against any hard substance, the elastic nature of the cork would cause her to rebound, and, by yielding to the force of the shock, escape staving. Independently of this contrivance, in order to increase her buoyancy and render her upsetting an impossible occurrence, copper pipes full eight inches in diameter filled with air, were passed from head to stern in the inside just below the gunnel. Above these pipes was a bench for the accommodation of persons who might have the good fortune to be saved from shipwreck. She carried two masts and two square sails, and was

generally manned by a crew of fifteen picked men. The great security of her construction very much diminished the peril that usually accompanies the saving of human lives upon occasions like the present, though it was still attended with considerable danger.

The moment it was perceived that there was a ship in jeopardy, the crew assembled with ready alacrity, and launched the life-boat into the turbulent waters. The anxiety upon every countenance to save the lives of their fellow-creatures was extreme. The sympathies of humanity were beautifully portrayed in the rough features of those kind-hearted fishermen. I have ever since respected, nay, I may almost say venerated, the short petticoat-trousers and heavy jack-boots of the piscatorial seafarer. I love a fisherman, and respect his craft. Upon this occasion every man claimed the homage of those who witnessed his calm intrepidity and earnestness in the cause of his suffering fellow-creatures.

I ultimately took down the account given by one of the men of their visit to the wreck, and give it from his communication.

They launched from the shore, accompanied by the fervent good wishes of their townsmen. The wind had somewhat subsided, but the sea was in awful commotion; nevertheless, the lightness of their bark caused it to leap over the waves as if it defied their fury, and was secure from the peril which they threatened. Notwithstanding her extreme buoyancy, the billows frequently rolled over her bows, completely filling her with water, a large portion of which escaped as she yielded her side to leeward, burying her gunnel a moment in the tumultuous flood, then rising with the lightness of a gull upon the assaulting waters. She was instantly baled out by the crew, with an activity that gave little time for the water to accumulate.

On they went, bounding through the foaming crests of the surges, which the boat dashed on either side of her keel. The men, in spite of all their skill, were exposed to considerable peril, from the occasional heaving of the sea over the boat's bow, which threatened to wash them overboard; and this it would have done, had they

not cling to the seats during the shock. The sudden lurching of the boat, too, would have been a fatal movement to any less accustomed to the storms so frequent off this coast, and which they continually encounter in their small undecked fishing-boats. The steadiness of the men was beautiful to behold. Not one of them for an instant blanched from the perils by which they were surrounded; and these were greatly multiplied as they advanced nearer the stranded vessel, to the relief of which they were anxiously directing their dangerous course.

As they approached the shallows, the cross groundswell rendered the boat much more liable to ship seas, and seven of the men were employed continually in baling. Sea after sea poured over her, but could not swamp her, owing to the peculiarity of her construction. The crew had now more difficulty than ever in keeping themselves from being washed overboard. They were obliged to lower the mainsail, and keep on the boat just sufficient canvass to steady her, and give her an impulse towards the object of their perilous undertaking. The breakers, as they rolled hissing over the bank, investing the atmosphere above with a mantle of spray, presented a fearful aspect of danger. How to approach the stranded ship was the difficulty. One part of the bank was so shoal that the boat could not venture too near; the crew were therefore obliged to keep her on that side of the wreck where the depth of water enabled her to float with security. When within the immediate influence of the breakers, it being impossible to keep her steady, she was of course subjected to the dangerous contingency which now perpetually happened, of being filled with water. It was astonishing, however, in spite of those menacing evils, how quickly she got rid of her liquid burthen. The promptness and decision of the men were above all praise. The skill with which the man at the helm met the billow, and rode over its shaggy bosom, was a noble sight—though, frequently, in spite of his exertions, the wave for a moment buried her within its briny womb; but she rose out of the unwelcome embrace with the freedom and lightness of a swan in its pastime.

They were by this time within twenty yards of the ship. Her crew were clinging to her bulwarks on the weather-side. Every wave that struck against her swept her deck from stem to stern, and rendered it difficult for the unfortunate seamen to maintain their hold. She was a merchant-ship of about three hundred tons burthen, and, being heavily laden, had already sunk deep into the sand. Several pigs which had just been washed overboard, were seen struggling in the deep waters, but they were allowed to perish, as every moment's delay increased the peril of the unhappy crew. The cries of the latter came upon the ear through the crashings of the tempest, beseeching despatch, as they were in extremity. The hoarse scream of supplication roused the energy of the boatmen to fresh exertions. It was an awful sound, and they could not answer the appeal with that alacrity which their own hearts prompted. The surf broke over the bank with such terrific fury, that they had the greatest difficulty to avoid being cast upon the shoal.

They were now within ten yards of the vessel. Being to leeward, they lowered the sail, as the elevated position of the hull broke the force of the wind, and arrested the impetus of the breakers. Having thus got into what sailors called the lull of the sea, they found themselves better able to steady the boat, though the cross-swell was so troublesome, that it required great skill and caution to prevent her being forced upon the bank. There was no possibility of getting near the wreck without incurring the hazard of being dashed to pieces against her hull; they were, therefore, obliged to keep the boat off. As they had now no sail set to steady her, and send her over the chafing surges, she was continually filled with water, and no efforts of the balers could keep her free. At this moment one of the crew on board the wreck, who had been clinging to an anchor at her bow, was washed off with a force that sent him several yards from his hold. In an instant he was swept past the boat with the velocity of a thunderbolt. He rose upon the surface with evident difficulty, struggled fiercely, then

sank before the boat could reach him. He did not rise again, but slept his last sleep within the ocean's bosom.

Turning again towards the vessel, the boat regained its former position, and one of the fisherman, standing at the bow, flung a small rope on board. It was instantly caught by one of the sailors, who, having observed the action, was prepared to receive it. Without a moment's delay he fastened the rope round his body, and sprang into the sea. Although instantly dragged through the water to the boat, he was senseless when hauled on board.

By this time, from the repeated shocks of the breakers, the ship had sprung several planks, and the water poured into her hold, which was filled in a short time. It had become manifest, that she would soon go to pieces; and the danger, therefore, of the unhappy crew became every instant more imminent. Only one had yet been dragged into the boat, and there remained fourteen to rescue, besides the captain's wife, who was on board, with her infant a few weeks old. The roaring of the wind, mingled with the clashing of the waves, and the hallooing of the men from the boat to the vessel, and from the vessel to the boat, produced a blended uproar perfectly deafening. A crash was now heard in the stranded vessel, and the main-mast fell by the board. It was almost immediately followed by the mizen and fore-masts, which (having lost their support above decks) fell likewise with an ominous splash into the "yeasty deep." The cord was again flung to the wreck. The captain seized it, in order to fix it round the body of his wife, who clasped her infant to her bosom, the babe being fastened to it by a shawl wrapped round the mother's waist. At this moment she was swept from the gangway, together with her husband, who was in the act of fixing the rope. Both disappeared, but almost immediately rose amid the convulsed waters, which broke over them with frightful impetuosity. One of the fisherman, with heroic resolution, having dragged the cord on board the boat, tied it round him, and plunging into the sea, swam towards the hapless woman just as she was sinking. With desperate energy she clung to her preserver,

and both were hauled into the boat, the former in a state of exhaustion. The unhappy husband was drowned. When the wretched woman saw him sink, her screams rose above the clamour of the elements. She would have leaped into the waves, had she not been restrained by the powerful arm of her preserver, who held her, offering that consolation which springs spontaneously from a feeling heart, and assuages by its earnestness the agony which it cannot remove. The infant was senseless when rescued from the billows, but the warmth of the parent's bosom eventually restored it. She had, however, much difficulty in protecting it from the heavy volumes of water which occasionally rolled over her, in spite of all the efforts of the crew to evade so unwelcome an intrusion.

By this time, with extreme labour, and at considerable hazard to their preservers, ten of the seamen on board the stranded ship had been released from their jeopardy. There remained still three to rescue. The cord was again flung to the wreck, and secured by one of the unhappy men. So many of the ship's planks had sprung, that it was every instant apprehended the hull would go to pieces. Each sea which broke over her added to the mischief. She groaned, and her whole frame vibrated with the concussion. At length a terrific breaker struck her upon the weather quarter—a tremendous crash followed—a second and a third breaker rolled on and struck her—she reeled a moment—the spray hid her from sight, and after a short interval nothing was to be seen but her planks floating upon the agitated expanse. Before the rope could be fastened round the body of one of the unrescued sailors, the shock came—the deck opened—the frame of the vessel was rent asunder—and the three unhappy men sunk into an unconsecrated grave.

The crew of the life-boat had succeeded in saving ten out of fifteen, besides the bereaved mother and her fatherless infant. They had preserved their lives at the momentary hazard of their own. Melancholy though it was to behold so many of their fellow-creatures descend into the bosom of the dark waters, there to sleep their

last sleep amid a new and strange community, they had, nevertheless, the satisfaction derived from the consciousness of having rescued twelve of the unfortunate persons, though five had perished. Having done all that human skill and intrepidity could do in the hour of peril for the salvation of human life, they turned the prow of their boat towards the shore. Their progress was rapid, because they had both wind and tide in their favour, though the storm continued to rage with unabated fury. They ran, however, before the wind, and the life-boat leaped over the billows, which pursued the buoyant fugitive, with their frothy crests reared and threatening to overwhelm her; but they could not overtake her, as she bounded lightly onward, and at length reached the shore without having scarcely shipped a sea during her return.

The fishermen and their companions were received by the inhabitants of Lowestoff with earnest congratulations; the unfortunate seamen who had been rescued from the wreck were conducted to the inn, where they were comfortably clothed and fed, and provided with money to proceed to their several homes. The captain's widow was taken into the house of a charitable lady, with whom she has finally become domesticated as housekeeper, serving her with that fidelity which gratitude prompts and honesty ensures. The infant which was saved with its mother from the wreck, is now a beautiful girl, fast growing up into a handsome woman.

A PAIR OF TURTLES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PURITAN'S GRAVE."

Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along Morea's hills, the setting sun—
Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light.

MORE lovely than any sunset, whether in Grecian or in northern climes, is the placid close of a mildly expiring life. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." There is a beauty, therefore, for those who have a heart to appreciate it, even in solitary old age, or on a companionless dying bed: but how much more interesting is the sight of an affectionate old couple tottering to the grave together, who have been lovely in their lives, and in death are undivided. I have seen such a sight as this: it is among the earliest and strongest of my recollections: and never do I hear the well-known line of the bard of Erin—

There's nothing half so sweet in life as love's young dream,—

but I immediately think of the aged and venerable couple who lived together in one house, and with one heart, for upwards of fifty years, and slowly sank together, with an unabated unity of affection, into one grave; and I cannot but suppose that they found the last days of their loving life quite as sweet as "love's young dream." It is a scene worth preserving, lacking as it may all poetical circumstance or embellishment.

The couple to whom I refer, and whose image I am now endeavouring to present to the world's eye, belonged to the most unpoetical class in society, and dwelt in a

region the most unromantic that it is possible to imagine: they were among the very humblest of the middle class, and their abode was in one of the eastern suburbs of the great metropolis, somewhat beyond that delectable region called Mile-End. The house in which they lived still remains, but so surrounded with buildings of recent erection, that it is hardly to be recognised. When I first knew it, it stood alone in a dull and silent lane, which was seldom used save as a thoroughfare to some marshes that lay along the river's side. From the front of the house you had a smoky prospect of the steeples and domes of the great city, and from the back you might see the ships coming up or going down the river. The dwelling had once been a small farm house; it was built with a dingy red brick, which time, and smoke, and damp, have now rendered almost black. When I knew it, it had casement windows, which, having been but lately replaced by sash windows, give the poor old house the melancholy gloomy aspect of a superannuated dandy clad in cast-off finery of a recently by-gone fashion. When Mr. and Mrs. Smith, the name of my old friends, lived there, although the house might have somewhat faded from its pristine glory, yet the place looked respectably old, and particularly well adapted to its inhabitants. It had a pretty papered parlour for Sunday use, coldly furnished with a thin Kidderminster carpet, a few high-backed, black mahogany chairs, and a pair of scanty, old chintz window curtains, thin and transparent as muslin. There was also a glazed corner cupboard, which contained the Sunday tea-things. This apartment was only used to drink tea in on Sundays; there being for common use another room of that amphibious kind, between parlour and kitchen, as may yet be seen in villages and small country towns, having a kitchen range, a brick sanded floor, elm chairs, a deal table, and stout blue stuff window-curtains. Everything was brightly and beautifully clean.

Mr. Smith had a place in the India-house, as porter, or something of that kind. He had held it for many years, and latterly it was mercifully made almost a sinecure to him; for he did not like to retire, though his

services could not amount to much—the task of walking there and back again, in his old age, being quite enough for a day's work; but he liked to look on and see that things were done properly. He used to wonder what would become of the East-India Company and the great house in Leadenhall-street when he should no longer be able to give them the benefit of his presence and advice. His personal appearance was particularly neat, and his address courteous beyond his station. He wore a brown bob wig, and a uniform snuff-coloured suit, which the people all along Whitechapel and Mile-end-road were as familiar with as with the return of morning and evening. Mrs. Smith was as neat as her husband. Having once seen, it would be impossible for any one to forget, her snow-white mob-cap, plaited round her placid face with such an exquisite adaptation, that it seemed difficult to say whether the cap was made for the face, or the face for the cap. They had not many neighbours, or many acquaintances, but all they had spoke and thought very highly of them; yet when you came to inquire who and what the Smiths were, and why every body spoke so well of them, the only account you could get of the matter was, that they were worthy old creatures whom every body liked. They were certainly not the dispensers of much wealth either in the way of business or of charity, for they had not much to dispense. They had no particular brightness of intellect, nor did they take any part in the general interests and concerns of the parish. But they were such nice-looking old people—they were in nobody's way—they did not hurt any one's self-love. They had not done or said anything to win the good-will of their neighbours, but they had gradually grown into the hearts of those that knew them. They looked as if they wished far more good than they could possibly do. Human beings are for the most part in a state of care, of struggling, of anxiety; and the faces that you mostly meet in the great thoroughfares, and in the more multitudinous resorts of men, have upon them marks of doubt, or fear, or selfish calculation; a smiling and habitually contented countenance is as rare a thing in the great lottery of the world as a great prize

used to be in the state lotteries. Therefore the very appearance of these good people was a pleasant sight to their neighbours—a kind of moral sunshine—an oasis in the desert—a paradise in a vale of tears.

Happy, pleased, and contented, as they were, and apparently creeping through life as almost the only undisturbed couple amid the agitations of the world, they had not been without their troubles in days past. When you see a pleased and happy infant stretching its tender limbs upon its mother's lap, and forming its pretty face into dimpled smiles at each new sight of wonder which the untried world presents to its eager eyes, little can you imagine to what cares and fears, to what sorrows and sufferings, it may be exposed in after life. So in like manner when you see an aged pair quietly melting away the latter hours of their mortal life, and looking as mere sleepy spectators of the busy and careful world around them, you cannot say what sorrows they may not have experienced, nor do you know to what storms and trials they may have been exposed: for as the cloudless sunrise tells not of the storms that are coming, so neither does the placid sun-set, gorgeous with its golden clouds, bear manifestation of the storms that have been.

I knew this venerable couple only in their latter days, and, from what I saw then, I should have thought that their whole lives had glided calmly along, without a ripple or a breeze. But they had borne their share of the trials of life; they had brought up a large family with care and tenderness, and with the usual hopes which parents form for their children; but the world had gone hardly with their children, who had been dispersed in various directions, and exposed to various hardships, so that the old people in their latter days had none of their family near them, except a grandchild—an orphan girl, whom they had brought up from her childhood. At two years of age, having lost both father and mother, the old people took her to live with them, and she became to them a substitute for all their other children, who were married away from them, settled or unsettled, here and there, and every where, save within reach of their parents. Little Lucy was suffered to grow up in a kind of amiable

and quiet wildness; she was placed under very little restraint, because from her constitutional meekness she needed but little. Her education too was more of the heart than of the head; her only preceptress had been her grandmother, who would not part with the little living treasure for so many hours in the day as a school education demanded. Perhaps the child lost little in literature by this arrangement, and certainly she gained much in gentleness and sweet simplicity of manners.

As the child grew up to maturity, the old people made equally rapid strides towards the close of their mortal pilgrimage. And every day they needed more and more the attentions and care of their affectionate and grateful grandchild. Lucy was quite pleased to assist her grandmother in the many monotonous toils of the domestic day. There were many culinary mysteries on which the little girl, in the days of her childhood, had looked with not much less awe than did the heathen folk of old regard the Elusinian mysteries, and to these—I mean the culinary, not the Elusinian mysteries—did her kind and gentle grandmother gradually introduce her. Daily and hourly did the affectionate grandchild become more interesting and more important to the old people. They had loved their children with sincere and deep attachment, but they seemed to love this young dependent more than they had ever before loved any human being; and when the little girl found how useful she was, and how pleasantly her assistance was received, she grew most prettily proud of the importance of her station, and the value of her services. It is a pleasant thing to feel one's-self to be something in the world. Naturally indolent and fond of ease as the generality of mankind may be, there are few who would not cheerfully, or at least willingly, undergo much labour in order to enjoy the satisfaction of conscious importance. In point of external and extensive importance, there is a very wide difference, but in point of internal feeling very little difference, between a minister of state and a little girl who is just beginning to find herself useful in a humble domestic establishment.

Old age was now creeping upon the grandfather and

grandmother with sure and silent steps; their strength was declining, their feet becoming less firm, and their voices more tremulous. But the poor old creatures themselves hardly perceived the change; and, while they availed themselves of the aid of their grandchild, they fancied that it was more to gratify her innocent pride, than to assist their own infirmities. It is one of the kind arrangements of Providence, that while the various changes of our frame are sent to admonish us of the frail tenure by which we hold our mortal lives, the admonitions brought by these changes come upon us most gently, reaching the soul through the softened medium of reflection, rather than forcing themselves roughly and rudely upon the senses. When we rise in the morning, we feel ourselves no older than when we retired to rest at night; and when we go to bed at night, we fancy ourselves no older than when we rose in the morning: it is only by looking back upon years that we can ascertain the power of days. We have all a natural reluctance to recognise the symptoms of coming age; and when we take the arm of a younger friend to steady our trembling steps, it is done more with the air of a patronage conferred than of an assistance received;—so did old Mr. Smith take the arm of his grandchild when he first felt the tottering infirmity of age,—so did old Mrs. Smith accept the domestic assistance of the little girl.

From her earliest recollection, knowing no other kindred and having no other acquaintance, Lucy was exclusively attached to her grandfather and grandmother. The very meek and pleasant manners of the old people had effectively won the little girl's heart, and she very sincerely thought that there were not in the whole world two more so good, so wise, so kind as they. But as she herself became more and more serviceable to them, aiding them with her own important and busy help, she loved them yet the more deeply; and while she endeavoured to pity their increasing infirmities, she almost rejoiced in their weakness, as affording her an opportunity of exercising towards them a patronising and a grateful care. She was delighted at finding herself so valuable to them, and thus her affection for them increased

more and more, for it was linked by the double bond of patronage and gratitude. As Lucy grew up, happy in her quiet home, and pleased with what she had hitherto seen of human life, the expression of her countenance became more interestingly developed, displaying those

benignant looks
That for a face not beautiful did more
Than beauty for the fairest can do.

It is not of course to be supposed that all the neighbours should admire the neat and placid aspect of the old couple, and have no word or thought of commendation for the pleasant looks of Lucy. She also partook of the praises and good words spoken of her grandfather and grandmother; and as she met with her share of general approbation, she was not altogether without some particular and individual notice:—but so great was her attachment to her grandfather and grandmother, that she would listen to no proposals which tended to take her away from them. Lucy had a very kind and tender heart of her own; but so much of it belonged to her grandfather and grandmother, that she had little left for strangers. As however the young man who presumed to ask the honour of her hand was very good and steady, and altogether highly respectable according to his station in life, and as he had never said or done anything at all calculated to offend the young woman, she had not quite the heart to refuse him absolutely, but gave him a conditional promise, saying that they were both young enough at present, and that she would never leave her grandfather and grandmother to the care of strangers. This of course was very reasonable, and highly amiable; nor could the modest suitor complain that he was hardly used; he therefore made up his mind to wait patiently till the old folks were gone. It could not, he thought, be very long, for they were at least eighty years of age, and both very infirm. After much reluctance, and many efforts to the contrary, Mr. Smith had, at last, given up his daily visits to the scene of his early and long-continued labours, and had consented to accept a small annuity for the remainder of

his days. Still he did not like to take leave of his office entirely, but hoped that when the spring should advance, and he got rid of his little cold—for he had always been subject to a cold in the winter—and got a little more strength in his limbs, he might be able to go to the warehouse again; and he particularly desired that, if at any time his assistance or advice was deemed necessary, they would not fail to send for him, and he would be at the expense of the stage if not able to walk. It so happened, however, that the East-India Company, was amply able to conduct its own affairs without any encroachment upon the old age and retirement of my friend, Mr. Smith.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith were now always at home, and Lucy was always with them, and occasionally Lucy's suitor paid them a visit. He was very polite and attentive to the old people, who had now become so infirm, that it did not seem likely that they could hold out much longer. They could walk, and that was all, for they could not lift their feet from the ground, but went shuffling along like a piece of old furniture upon casters. The utmost extent of their walking was to the church, a distance of about a quarter of a mile; and all the neighbours used to wonder every time that they saw them, for they thought that every time must be the last. It was as much as the poor old couple could do to keep their eyes open, and their attention awake, during the service. They had divers contrivances to effect this object, but their principal resource was the snuff-box. Mrs. Smith had a venerable tortoise-shell snuff-box, with a painting representing Strephon playing the flute to Chloe, who was sitting on a verdant bank with a lamb in her lap; and when Mr. Smith began to nod, Mrs. Smith gave him a jog on the elbow, and held Strephon and Chloe, and Scotch rappee, under his nose, and he took a pinch, and for the next five minutes looked as gay as a lark, and all alive. In like manner did Mr. Smith return the compliment when it was needed, presenting to Mrs. Smith a battered old silver box, which had been worn till it was as thin as tissue paper. But if it chanced, as it sometimes would, that both parties fell asleep together, the moment the sermon

commenced, then there was no help for it—they might sleep on till the service was over. Lucy thought that they looked so placid, and so sweetly composed, that it was a pity to disturb them; that they would be sure to wake when the sermon was over, and that, even if they were asleep, they were most likely dreaming of some good old sermon they had heard in the good old days of their youth.

This worthy couple had been remarkable during the whole course of their lives for the unruffled serenity of their tempers; they quarrelled not with the world, nor with its Maker, nor with one another; but they looked round on the world with charitable feelings, up to Heaven with continual gratitude, and upon one another with a growing attachment. Even in their earlier days, when some share of troubles and anxiety fell to their lot, they met the event of the passing day with patience, and shed their tears silently—placidly—piously. When, therefore, old age came upon them, it neither found them fretful, nor made them peevish; it rather had the effect of increasing the calmness of their spirits, of intensifying the serenity of their souls. All that there had been of kindness and gentleness about them in days past, was in their declining years increased, so that the current of life ran smooth and clear to the very last. But not only did it run smooth, it also ran very slowly. The good old couple were infirm, standing, as it were, with one foot in the grave; and it seemed that one foot was all that the grave was likely to get for some time to come. There was nothing to ruffle, to shock, or to disturb them; they could not be much shocked if even there had been any evil tidings for them to hear, for their hearing was not quick, and their apprehension, at the very best, was slow, so that nothing could take them by surprise; then, again, their memory was so faint, that they could not lay anything to heart. Neither Lucy nor her suitor were disposed to philosophical observation, or they might have been interested in observing how curiously and beautifully life is gradually closed; how the senses and the various powers and passions of the mind are slowly folded up, till the world itself

seems to depart and vanish by degrees. Mr. and Mrs. Smith, in their most active and bustling days, had not seen or known much of the world; and now, in their time of decline, they knew less of it than ever; their own quiet home, their affectionate grandchild, the parish church, and a few old neighbours, were all the world to them; the rest they saw not, and thought not of—even the India house, and its manifold and complex interests, had faded away from the old man's memory, so that the world was leaving them, not they leaving the world. Lucy's suitor thought that they lived a long while; but he could not say that death would be a happy release to them, because there were no troubles, pains, or cares, belonging to them, from which they could be released. So time proceeded—days, weeks, months, years. They grew more and more infirm, but at the same time they grew more and more interesting to their neighbours and to Lucy. Their neighbours talked of them as a pair of wonders, and pointed them out to their friends. Lucy loved them for their very helplessness, for they had become as helpless as children, and she loved them in such. Lucy's suitor thought they lived too long, but he did not say so; on the contrary, he contributed as much as he could to their comfort, for he found that whoever would have Lucy's kind regard, must be kind and attentive to her aged kinsfolk.

Then came, at length, the last stage of human infirmity—they could no longer walk, even with assistance—the external air was too much for them; their world was now nothing but their own apartment, but still there was peace and placidity in that small world; they were conscious of each other's existence, and happy in that consciousness. They were scarcely sensible of their infirmities, for they were sensible scarcely of any thing, save merely of being. They were thankful for the kind attentions paid to them; and even though utterly helpless and infirm, yet there was a peculiar interest in their appearance, for there was a look of cheerfulness about them; a dreaminess—but a pleasant dreaminess—a twilight, fading so gracefully into night, that the coming darkness was divested of its terrors. The

neighbours made inquiry after them every day, and thought that they would never die:—but they did die—yet so gently that Lucy knew it not, till, speaking to one of them, she received no answer. They were sitting in their easy chairs, one on the one side of the fire, the other on the other side. Their thread of life was so attenuated, that it broke without a shock. To them was granted the rare blessing, to meet in a better world without parting in this.

THE BRIDAL OF GERTRUDE.

BY G. P. R. JAMES.

AT the distance of about twelve miles from the point at which the Neckar falls into the magnificent Rhine, between the small and beautiful town of Neckersteinach, and the famous city of Heilbron, a deep and narrow gorge, lined with wood, and flanked, on either hand, by rocks, carries down a small and sparkling stream into the wider channel of the Neckar. Following the course of that rivulet up towards the mountains of the Odenwald, in which it takes its rise, lies a small village domineered by one of the frowning castles of the ancient feudal lords of Germany. That castle now stands a gray ruin, raising its proud but shattered head in the majesty of desolation, twined with immemorial ivy, and with its aged brow crowned, by the fantastic hand of nature, with rich garlands of wild flowers. Thus have I seen it myself, catching the shadows of the clouds as they flitted across the sky, whilst the humbler village, that has grown up at its feet, lay smiling in the calm sunshine. But in the days that I speak of, though the lords of that castle dwelt amidst the clouds and storms of ambitious life, yet the light and the sunshine of prosperity was upon those castle walls, and splendour and pageantry, the song, the revel, and the feast, rioted, day after day, within the stately halls. How the means were obtained by which that profuse expenditure was kept up, how often the groaning peasant was forced to yield his hard-earned produce to supply his lord's extravagance, how often the wandering merchant was despoiled of the fruits of his industry, to furnish resources to the idle and the turbulent, how often plunder, massacre and crime were the sources from which that luxury was derived, may easily be divined by all those who know the history of those times, and of that country. For the present our story leads us to the humbler dwellings which lay below.

It was a pretty village, and a peaceful spot, for the inhabitants paid highly for the protection of their lords above, and, in general, obtained it in due measure, so that the evil days they knew were few. Each cottage stood by itself, surrounded by the host of apple trees, which still distinguishes that part of the world: each had its little garden of herbs and fruit; each had its little portion of allotted woodland; and when the lords of Erlach looked-out from their stronghold, over the world of forest that lay extended at their feet, they could distinguish their own immediate villages by the glow of the apple blossoms, or the snowy flowers of the cherry, chequering the darker foliage of the beech and the oak. Little variety existed amongst the houses; some were larger, and some were smaller, but all were built very nearly on the same plan, and the only two which distinguished themselves at all from the rest, were those of the pastor of the place, and of the forester of Count Erlach. The latter was a wealthy man, as the affairs of the village went. He had been a great favourite with his lord, who was one of the best of the nobles of those days; and under him, Müller, the forester, had accumulated no insignificant wealth. On the death of the old lord, some apprehensions had been entertained by the worthy peasant, regarding the duration of his favour with the young count, who had been absent for many years from his paternal home, gracing the Imperial Court, to which the emperor was, at that time, making every effort to draw the young nobility of distant principalities. He was reported to be a gay and gallant youth, somewhat too much addicted to the pleasures of the court, more familiar with the camp, the battle-field, the ball-room, and the capital, than with the sports of rural life, and the usual avocations of a feudal noble: and old Karl Müller shook his head, when the news came that the old count had died in Vienna, whither he had gone to see his son.

The villagers found no difficulty in translating that prophetic shake of the head, easily divining that the worthy forester believed new days and less pleasant ones were about to fall upon them. No immediate change, however, was perceptible: the forester was continued in

all his privileges and charges ; all the old servants of the castle were retained and provided for ; every month, couriers from Vienna brought the orders of the young count, displaying great care and exactitude in maintaining every thing in the state wherein his father had kept it up. The feudal retainers necessary for the protection of the peasantry, were always held in a due state of preparation and discipline ; and so prompt and well-judged were all the arrangements of the young lord, that it became a proverb amongst the people of the Odenwald, that Count Wilhelm had a long arm, for it reached from Vienna. The peasantry, however, and the old retainers, the good seneschal of the castle, the lieutenant commanding the soldiers, the forester himself, and even the fool whose jests or nonsense had given amusement to the long dinners of the old count, began to grumble as year after year passed by, and their young lord never made his appearance amongst them.

Our tale, however, refers more immediately to the forester and his family, which consisted of three persons besides himself. His wife had been dead for years, and he had never taken unto himself another helpmate, alleging as a reason—though perhaps it was not the true one—that, having noble blood in his veins, being a poor relation of the count himself, he could never hope to find another wife of equal dignity with his last good dame, who, by some very circuitous process, was linked, by a long chain, to the Lanschadens of Neckersteinach. She had left him, however, enough pledges of their love to prevent his home from looking desolate : two sturdy lads, who soon grew up into stout and powerful men ; and one fair girl, who, from a pretty child, rose, day by day, into fresh beauties, till she ended in becoming the envy of all the women's hearts, and the admiration of all the men throughout the country round.

The eldest son was called Karl after his father ; the second was named Wilhelm from the young count ; and the girl had received the name of Gertrude, from the late countess, who had held her at the baptismal font. If the two youths showed forth, in their strong and stalwart limbs, the vigorous formation of their father, and enabled

him to say that not a knight in all the emperor's court was better formed than they were, whatever gentle blood the family did really possess, made itself manifest in Gertrude Müller, as she grew up towards womanhood. The fine and delicate features, the graceful and rounded form, the easy and dignified movements, the bright and thoughtful expression, were all above the ordinary habits and appearance of the people with whom she lived: and, though she mingled amongst them with pleasure, and neither affected nor perceived a difference, yet they themselves discovered it; and while a few, who could not understand or appreciate her worth, felt angry at the superiority they were unwilling to admit, the rest of the peasantry paid her the tacit tribute of admiration and respect.

And now it was Gertrude Müller's bridal morning, and though, amongst the youths of the villages round about, there might be, here or there, a sore heart, no one was unwise enough to show his disappointment. Every girl, throughout ten miles of the Odenwald, was glad; for some knew Gertrude, and loved her; and many who loved her not, thought it quite as well that her fair face should be one out of the way, and her sweet voice sound no longer in the ears of the young men of the neighbourhood. In short, all the youth of her native kreis wished her happiness and the matron's coif, as soon as might be; but many of the elder part of the community shook the wise head, and thought that both old Karl Müller and his daughter were doing an unwise thing. In the first place, they urge that she was very young, too young to take upon her the serious duties of a wife. But Karl said not a whit; her mother had been his wife at the same age. Besides that cogent reason for her marrying soon, he had one which was more powerful still. Three weeks before, a youth, with several gallants in his train, had ridden up to the castle of Erlach, demanding to see its lord, though all the world knew, Karl observed, that the count was absent. This same gay young noble, however, after reposing for a time at the castle, had made an excuse to go down to the forester's house, and had remained there longer than old Karl liked. He had since returned twice alone, and sought by many a wile to speak to Gertrude

in private. "And I have great reason to believe," the forester added, "that he is the young Landschaden of Neckersteinach, who halts at no step which may gain his own purposes. So if the girl is in love, and likes to marry, why let her marry at once, in God's name."

Such was the answer of old Karl Müller to the first objection of those who had laid their remonstrances before him in form. But the second objection was more formidable. "Why, Karl," they said, "you are going to marry your daughter out of the Odenwald, when there are so many young men who would have given their right hand to have had her, and would have kept her with us always: you are going to give her to a citizen whom she has not known above a year!"

Now to whom was Gertrude Müller about to be wedded? the reader may be inclined to ask; and did her heart go with the hand she was to give? The answer to these two questions shall be both full and satisfactory. A little more than a year before, he to whom she was that day to bind herself, by ties indissoluble, first came to the village from the town of Heilbron, of which, it appears, he was a burgher; and his coming, or rather the motive thereof, made old Karl Müller, as well as many another old retainer of the house of Erlach, very angry. He came there to buy timber for a mercantile house, at Heilbron, and of course, in the first instance, alighted at the house of the forester. Old Karl bluffly told him that the count never sold his timber; but thereupon the burgher produced from his pocket the order of the young lord himself, for the sale of so many thousand trees, which the merchant was to choose at will, and to superintend in person the cutting down and removing them. This was a treble mortification to Karl Müller. In the first place, it confirmed a belief, which he had long entertained, that his young lord was ruining himself at Vienna. In the next place, he could not bear to see the trees cut down at all; and, in the third place, the count gave the young Jackanapes, as Karl did not scruple to call the citizen, authority which strongly trenchanted upon the privileges of the forester. He was very much inclined to be both refractory and uncivil; but Wilhelm Franz, for so the

stranger was called, gave him so little cause for wrath and indignation, heard him with so much good humour, and soothed him with such well-applied courtesies, that the old man ended by assuring him that it was with the count he was angry, not with him; and then, as in duty bound, asked him to take up his abode at the forester's house. Wilhelm Franz accepted his invitation frankly; and now came out so many good points in the young citizen's character, that he conquered all prejudices, and won the regard both of the old man and his two sons. He was a very handsome youth, though his face was rather bronzed by the sun, in travelling hither and thither on the business of the house; and his dark black hair, though cut somewhat short before, which the people of Erlach did not approve of, curled in rich masses over the rest of his head. His hand, the good people laughed at, because it was as white as a woman's, and they asserted that it was fit for nothing but to hold a pen behind a desk. In some of their rough sports upon the green, however, he soon proved that it would give a buffet which would stretch the strongest of them prostrate, so that nobody laughed at the white hand afterwards. Though, as a citizen well might be, he was, in some respects, more slightly made than the villagers, yet his limbs would bear even more fatigue, and occasionally displayed greater strength than theirs; and as they had at Heilbron their constant trials of skill in the market-place, he far excelled them in all manly sports and pastimes. Everything, however, that he did, was done with so much good nature, that no one was offended, and Wilhelm Franz became a general favourite.

At first, spending the greater part of the day in the woods with a number of workmen, some of whom he brought with him from Heilbron, and the rest of whom he engaged in the neighbourhood, he saw but little of Gertrude; but the timber was a long time in cutting, and as the days drew in, and the evenings grew long, they were brought more frequently together. All that passed between them, at first, was a gay word from the handsome young citizen, to the beautiful country girl: but some of Gertrude's mischievous young friends began to

jest her about Wilhelm Franz, so that, after a time, she would blush a little,—a very little,—when he spoke to her. Some change gradually took place in his manner, also. When her eyes were busy in some other direction, his would turn towards her, and gaze upon her, for many a minute, not with boorish rudeness, not with libertine scrutiny, but with a calm, grave, thoughtful expression, which was strange in a young man, looking upon such loveliness. Sometimes his reveries would end with a sigh, but yet he spoke no word of love; and even at night, when he might have sat beside her, over the blazing fire, saying all these little gallantries wherewithal gay youths bribe vanity to let them in, by a wrong entrance, into a maiden's heart, he would lean back from the blaze, and amuse the forester and his sons by many a tale of distant cities and lands they had never seen. One day, about the hour of dinner, a minstrel visited the cottage, bringing his cithern with him, and, in recompence for a hearty welcome, he played and sang to them some of his most famous airs. When he had done, Wilhelm Franz, somewhat to the minstrel's dismay, took up the instrument of sweet sounds, and seemed to examine it curiously.

"Take care!" exclaimed the singer, seeing him about to apply his hand to the strings; "you will put it out of tune, good youth."

Wilhelm Franz smiled, and swept the strings with his hand; but it was no discordant sound that he produced. Rich, and full, such as that minstrel's own hand had never brought forth from the instrument, were the tones that issued from the string, and Gertrude looked up in wonder. Her eyes met those of the young Heilbronner, and a mutual light seemed to pass into both their souls. Suddenly adding the full round tones of his musical voice to the instrument, he sang:

SONG.

"From a court, and a camp, and a lady's bower,
Three pilgrims took their way,
And each in his cap wore a faded flower,
And each, I heard him say:—

“Where art thou, Truth, immortal Truth!
We have sought thee far, in vain,
In the brain of age, in the breast of youth,
In city, and tent, and plain.”

“One had sought truth in a gallant knight,
Gallant, and good, and gay;
But he trusted that knight with his lady bright,
And the knight has stolen her away.

“From courtiers, and kings, and ministers wise,
The other returns, forlorn;
He has asked for truth!—they have given him lies!
And hark, how they laugh for scorn!

“The other sought truth in a lady’s heart,
A lady sweet and fair;
He found vanity, passion, caprice and art,
But truth!—no truth was there.”

“He should have come to Gertrude Müller,” said the forester, “for if there be truth in the whole world, it is in her little heart.” The colour in Gertrude’s cheek grew very deep; but Wilhelm Franz laid down the instrument, and fell into a fit of musing. The day that followed was a bright and sunshiny one, and the Heilbronner, with the old forester, went forth into the woods to superintend the work that was going on; while Gertrude took her way up the steep hill towards the castle, where she was sure of a kind reception from many of the old servants who still dwelt therein. The truth was, a rumour had spread that the young count was coming down, and her father sent her to seek tidings. Gertrude tripped away gaily enough; but when she was half way up the hill, she paused in the wooded path that she was pursuing, and walked slowly on, fallen into deep thought. What was the subject of her meditations matters not; they were apparently sad and moving, for, ere she reached the castle, she sat down upon one of the fragments of gray stone and wept. Remembering, however, that tears would leave traces, and traces would be remarked, she wiped them quickly away, and wandered about in the wood till she judged that the marks of her sadder employment must be effaced. She then climbed

the steep ascent without farther delay, and, passing unquestioned through the gateway with but a "good morrow" from one of the armed men who sat in the porch, she proceeded to seek the old seneschal's good dame. Learning in the outer hall, however, that the tidings were true, and that letters, announcing his speedy coming, had been received from the young noble, she crossed the court, ascended the great staircase, and, finding the door of one of the chief saloons open, she went in, for she had not seen it since she was a child.

There was a wide antique casement in a niche, and through it was streaming the sunshine and the sweet air of spring; and Gertrude went and gazed out thoughtfully. High up amidst the clouds of heaven, the castle, like an eagle on a rock, looked over the whole scene below; and there, beneath the fair girl's eye, lay all the brown world of the Odenwald, an interminable ocean of waving boughs, with the lights and shades from the flitting clouds, resting like the stains of gold and blue upon the wings of a butterfly, on the undulating surface of the hills. Around her hung the monuments of feudal state, banners and pennons, and costly arms, and rich arras, and ornaments of silver and of gold; but it was not on those she looked, but upon the prospect; and as she looked, she sighed, not that the sight was anything but fair, for few lovelier scenes ever met the human eye than that in its particular kind; but there was about it that vague, boundless, indefinite uncertainty, which has something akin with the feelings of the youthful heart, when some doubt or some fear, some new-born apprehension, some warning suspicion that life is not all so bright as we have dreamed it, causes us to pause and gaze over the misty future, and endeavour to scan more accurately, the true nature of the objects which lie grouped together in the golden indistinctness of distance.

She sighed as she stood in that deep recess and gazed forth from the open casement. There was a sigh near her that answered hers, and, turning round with a slight exclamation of surprise, she beheld one who was certainly in her thoughts at that moment. She blushed a good deal, and then she turned pale; but Wilhelm ad-

vanced towards her, and gliding his arm round her waist, took her hand in his, and gazed into the eyes that she raised imploringly, almost fearfully to his. "Gertrude!" he said, "Gertrude!" She answered not; but in that old hall, and in that sunshiny hour, fair Gertrude Müller was wooed and won.

"There were tears in your eyes before I came, dear girl," he said, as he led her back down the hill, his promised bride. "Why had my Gertrude been weeping?"

"Because I thought," she replied, "that if it were so difficult for a man to find truth, as your song said, a woman could never hope to meet with it at all."

"And dares my Gertrude then trust me?" demanded Wilhelm.

"It is our nature to trust!" replied Gertrude, "and I think you would not deceive me."

"Not for an empire!" answered the youth, and lifting his eyes towards the sky, his lips moved, as if registering the promise on high.

* * * * *

And it was Gertrude Müller's bridal day, and the sun had shone upon the bride and bridegroom as they went to, and came from the little village church. The blessing had been spoken, the festivities had begun, and modesty and love wound a sweeter garland round the temples of that fair bride, than the richest orange-flower that ever decorated the favourite of courts. Wilhelm trode proudly, and as he looked up to the lordly towers of the castle, rising haughtily above his Gertrude's humble home, his glance seemed to say, I envy not the lord of those high halls! My heart has found a happier resting-place.

When they had entered the cottage, however, and he was taking his seat by her side, one of the stout soldiers from the castle came down, and said that the old seneschal had just received letters from his lord at Vienna, and that Master Wilhelm Franz must even leave his fair bride for half an hour, and come to speak about the cutting of the wood.

"I will come by and by," said Wilhelm, smiling good-humouredly.

The man hesitated, but Gertrude whispered, "Better

go at once, Wilhelm, if you must go!" and he went; but, at the end of half an hour, he returned not, and the bridal party went out upon the green, beneath the apple-trees, to wait for his coming, ere they began the dance. Scarcely were they there, and Gertrude's heart was beating unquietly, when there came bursts of laughter through the trees, and the sound of cantering horses, and up rode a gay party of armed cavaliers, headed by him who had somewhat persecuted the sweet girl already.

"Are we in time for the wedding, boors?" he cried, laughing loud, "are we in time for the wedding?"

"Too late!" replied old Karl Müller, surlily.

"Too late!" answered Karl, his eldest son, with his eyes flashing fire.

"Nay, then I must e'en kiss the bride and depart!" said the cavalier springing to the ground, and, advancing with haughty boldness, but not without grace, he approached Gertrude, who blushed and trembled. "Wishing you all happiness, fair bride," he said, as he bent apparently to kiss her cheek. But, as he stooped, he threw his right arm round her waist, set his foot in the stirrup, sprang into the saddle, and, with the ease of one performing some long practised feat of the manège, he placed her on the horse before him, and struck his spurs into the charger's sides. The old man and his sons darted forward, and one got hold for a moment of the bridle rein; but a horseman who followed the other brought the youth to the ground with a blow of a mace, and the whole party rode off at full speed, roaring with laughter at the curses and shouts of the villagers. One long loud shriek was all that the lips of Gertrude uttered; her heart refused to beat, her brain grew giddy, and she fainted as she lay, held on the horse by the firm grasp of the cavalier's arm. After a time consciousness came back, and she opened her eyes; but she saw the brown woods, and the large branches of the trees, and the young green leaves hurrying rapidly before her sight: recollection was too terrible to bear, and she once more fainted. When next she recovered, she was in a large hall, splendidly decorated according to the fashion of that day; and two old women were bending over her, throw-

ing water in her face ; but, when she raised her eyes, the detested form of him who brought her thither met her sight, and she closed them again with a cold shudder. The women persuaded him to go away, but when he was gone, the words of praise that they bestowed upon him, and the language that they held to persuade the unhappy girl to his purposes, made her weep bitterly. They assured her that he would have gone to seek her a week before, and would have prevented her marriage altogether, had he not been held a prisoner by the Palatine, from whose hands he had only escaped two days.

"Wretch !" she exclaimed, "wretch !" But, as she spoke, he again entered the room, and waved the women away. He sat down beside her ; he grasped her hand in his ; he used the language of flattery and of corruption to the pure ears of Gertrude Müller. We will not dwell on what he said ; we will not stain this pure page with the words he uttered, and the persuasions he proffered ; but if he thought to light up one unholy feeling in her heart, oh ! how far was he mistaken. She thought of him she loved, and of the full but modest joy with which she had but that day bestowed her hand on him. She thought of those dear hopes, now likely to be blasted for ever, for she felt that she was utterly in the power of a libertine and ruthless man ; and as she did thus think, the words he uttered scarcely found meaning in her ear, and her eye wandered round the room and to the high oriel window seeking for means of escape. It found none, however ; no object showed itself through the open lattice, but the mountains that hem in the Necker, and the green waters of that beautiful stream flowing on between its mighty rocks ; and the high castle of the Dilsberg crowning the opposite hill. There was no escape, she saw ; but a fearful resolution presented itself to her mind. It was evident, from all she beheld, that the hall in which she sat was high up in some tower, built upon the edge of the precipice, and she thought that at least she could die rather than, even by force, wrong the faith she had plighted to him she loved. As she thus thought, and her eye wandered wildly to the casement, she felt the villain's arm seeking to glide

round her small waist. With a sudden scream she darted from him, sprang through the casement, and gained the parapet that ran round the tower. Had that parapet not been there, the sudden impulse of fear and desperation might have carried her resolution into effect at once. But there it stood, a barrier, easily overstepped, indeed, but still a barrier between her and that terrible act which she meditated. She paused to gaze! and found that she stood on the extreme verge of a tower, in one out of three castles, that, stretching along the craggy bank of the Necker, overhung the waters at a dizzy height of many hundred feet. She gazed down below! It was a sight to make the brain turn round; the blue thin air beneath, the broken rocks, jagged and sharp, the diminished birds skimming like specks over the surface of the stream. Can we blame her if she paused with a wildly beating heart, if she hesitated till a strong hand grasped her arm, and her power over her own destiny was gone? "Oh God, deliver me!" she cried; but the stranger answered with a laugh.

"Come, come, fair maiden!" he said; "God never delivers from the Landschaden; but I thank you for bringing me here. That idiot wardour has left the gates open, and there is no one in the court. I will nail his ears to the door-post. What if the troops of the Palatine were to know of such careless guard!"

As he spoke, there came the sound of a trumpet from the woods above, and it was echoed from the forest path below. A stronger passion now was roused in the breast of Gertrude's persecutor; and, for the moment, forgetting her existence, he darted away, and his steps clanged quickly through the hall. "Oh God deliver me!" cried Gertrude again; but she now cried so with better hope, and, for a single instant, she strained her eyes upon the part of the wood whence the sound of the trumpet had seemed to come. She caught the sight of arms gleaming through the trees, and she heard from the court below, the shouts of many voices giving loud commands for manning the walls and defending the castle. She could not catch the words, but she guessed their import, and the next moment a loud explosion from the

battlements beneath her feet, followed by another and another, told her that the Landschaden had anticipated attack by firing upon the approaching parties. The tower on which she stood seemed to rock with the concussion of the artillery, and, in a moment after, an answering flash blazed through the opposite wood, and, with a rushing sound, a cannon-ball passed through the air, tipping an angle of the tower as it rushed by, and scattering the masonry far and near. Running round the tower, she now thought only of escape, and gazing into every window which opened on the platform, she at length perceived one that led to a flight of stairs. It opened readily to her hand, and she passed through; and then, running down with a quick step, she only paused when her head became giddy with the incessant turning of the narrow staircase and the deafening roar of the artillery. Once, as she descended, a bright flash burst through one of the narrow loop-holes, and she saw the forms and fierce faces of armed men hurrying about upon one of the battlements hard by. She feared almost to move lest they should see her; but, as the roar of the guns was again heard, she hurried on with a beating heart, till the staircase terminated with a door on either hand. On the one side she heard a multitude of voices as if in eager debate, and, through the keyhole of the other, was pouring a stream of golden sunshine. She tried it and found it locked, but the heavy key was in, and turning it cautiously round, she drew the door back and took a step out into the air. She found herself in a long paved way, leading from the castle to which she had been carried, to another which stood beyond, perched half way up a tremendous rock, like the nest of a swallow, from which it derives its name with the peasantry to this day. The way was raised upon a high causeway, partly artificial, partly natural, and battlements and embrasures on each side showed it well calculated for defence. But, though the cannon were still there, the soldiers, all drawn to the side on which the attack began, had left it vacant, and Gertrude hurried on seeking for some way to escape. She could find none; the walls were too high for her to attempt to drop from them, and,

though the low sinking sun showed her that but little time yet remained for her to secure her flight, she found herself foiled wherever she turned. She hurried on, however, towards the other castle, gazing up to see if there too were any of those she had to fear, but it seemed, for the time, utterly deserted. No soldiers appeared gazing from the battlements at the distant fight; no head, protruded from the window, announced that any human being was within. Hesitating, trembling, listening, Gertrude entered through the open door, and found the hall vacant, though the remains of a half-finished meal showed that it had not long been so. She then, with better courage, searched round the courts and walls for some means of egress, but every gate was closed with heavy locks, and all the keys were gone. In disappointment, almost in despair, she paused and looked towards the other castle. The battlements were crowded, the roar of war was going on; but suddenly came louder shouts, and she saw some groups upon the very path she had just followed. Where could she fly for concealment? There was a flight of steps led down from one of the remote halls, apparently cut through the rock on which the castle stood, and, not without a hope that it might conduct her to some sally-port, Gertrude took her way down, lighted by an occasional loop-hole, though the sun, sinking fast behind the mountains, gave but scanty beams. It led but to a vault, from which there was a door indeed, but it too was locked, and Gertrude sat herself down and wrung her hands in the bitterness of despair. There was a window, but it was too small for human being to pass, and was grated besides with iron bars; and all that it enabled the unhappy girl to do, was to gaze out in the growing twilight, and watch the groups hurrying to and fro upon the walls of the other castle. Soon that twilight faded away, and all that she could see was the form of the tall towers, bursting forth every now and then as the eager flash of the artillery ran along the battlements; but, after a short time the windows seemed to shine forth with an unusual brightness, a glare was seen through the loop-holes, a rolling pile of yellow smoke rose above the white clouds that

the artillery had caused below, and on it played a flickering light which was not like the flashing of the cannonade. Then came loud cries and shouts and execrations, borne upon the wind, and the tramp of hurrying crowds, and the sound of the trumpet. Nearer, more near, came the mingled roar along the causeway; and then she heard it in the halls above. All seemed confusion and disarray, till suddenly the roar of the cannon was again heard, and she found that the artillery on the walls above were now pointed along the causeway, to drive back a pursuing enemy. Trembling, almost fainting, she lay in one corner of the vault, when suddenly steps were heard descending, torches flashed around the walls, and, in a moment after, the voice of her persecutor struck upon her ear, exclaiming "Didst thou think thou hadst escaped me? No, no, fair maiden! you shall live or die with the Landschaden. Throw open the door, Heinrich!" and, catching her up in his arms, he was bearing her forward through the door, which one of those who were with him had unlocked, to a rocky path leading down to the river. The horror of his touch, however, drew a sudden scream from the lips of Gertrude, and, setting her down, he cried with a blasphemous exclamation, "She will draw them hither with her cries! By Heaven I will drive my dagger into her!—Stay," he continued; "let me look out!" and he took two or three steps forth down the hill,—“Fire and blood!” he cried again after a moment’s pause, “here is Count Erlach’s banner!”

Inspired with instant hope of making herself heard, Gertrude uttered scream on scream; but the fierce Landschaden bounded back towards her with his dagger in his hand, exclaiming “Slay her, slay her! we must fight to the last or die; but she shall not escape!”

A step more would have brought him to the vault; but, at that moment, there was a loud explosion above. The voices of the cannon were unheard in the roar,—the Landschaden looked up towards the blazing walls; an immense mass of stone-work descended through the air, and, striking on his brow and chest, rolled, with his dead body, slowly down the rock. Gertrude darted for-

ward towards a party of men advancing quickly up the steep. There was a knight leading them on, sword in hand, with the banner of her father's lord waving above his head. "Save me! save me! save me!" cried she, and as she reached his knees, and clasped them with her extended arms, sense and thought, terror, and joy, and hope, all passed away at once, and she fell prostrate before Count Erlach's feet.

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With the terrible sensation of one waking from a long swoon, Gertrude unclosed her eyes, and gazed around her as some castle clock was striking eleven. There was the light of many tapers in the room, and rich tapestry waved on every side, while hangings of white, and crimson, and gold, surrounded the splendid bed on which she lay. The arms of the Counts of Erlach, emblazoned with rich colouring, ornamented the ceilings, and the furniture, and all around her, was a dream of magnificence, such as she had never seen before. Round a table, in the middle of the room, stood three persons, while several girls, in the garb of waiting-women, appeared at the other side of the room. The first of the nearer three was an old man, in the garb of a physician, pouring some fluid from a phial into a Venice-glass, and his face was turned directly towards Gertrude. On one side of the table, stood an old man, of powerful frame, clad partly in armour; and Gertrude knew her father. Those two were bareheaded; but on the side nearest to her, with his back towards her, stood one, who wore his crimson bonnet and high plume; beside him lay a pile of armour, cast hastily down, and from his shoulders fell an easy cloak, lined with rich furs, and tied with tassels of gold.

"This, my lord count, will bring her to herself, I will insure," said the leech, as he poured out the medicine; "she does but faint, though the fit is long and terrible!"

"Where can Wilhelm be?" thought Gertrude; but she hastened to relieve her father's fears, exclaiming, in a voice still faint, "My father!"

All started, and turned towards her, at the sound; but it was not old Karl Müller reached her first. That gay and glittering cavalier dropped at once the glass he was

taking from the physician, darted forward, caught her in his arms, and pressed her again and again unto his heart. Trembling, fearful, uncertain; yet hoping, thrilling with fancies it seemed madness to believe, she pushed him gently back, and gazed upon his face. "It is! it is!" she cried, casting her arms round his neck, "Wilhelm! dear Wilhelm!" Then, sinking back again, she pointed to the glittering coat of arms that hung above that bridal bed.

"True!" he said, "dear Gertrude, it is all quite true."

"Then I know you, Wilhelm," she said, almost mournfully; "but who am I?"

"Gertrude, Gräfin of Edlach, my own dear wife!" replied the count; "noble both by your father's and your mother's side, and with a dower of beauty and of goodness worth a prince's hand;—you are mine, Gertrude, mine for ever! To-morrow I will tell you more. Now rest, sweet girl,—rest, and recover from all you have suffered. Your lover, your husband, will watch by your side; and, safe in his castle, and guarded by his care, no more such sad scenes shall happen, as those which have chequered Gertrude's bridal-day."

THE MISLETOE BOUGH.

BY T. CROFTON CROKER.

BALLYWALTERBEG HOUSE was the seat of Mr. Edmund Fitzgibbon. He was a widower with two daughters, and two as fine bouncing Irish girls they were as need to be. They had fine hair and fine teeth; fine eyes and fine figures. They could, each of them, play a country dance or jig, with admirable spirit, on the piano; and they sung like angels. For these and other feminine accomplishments, they were indebted to Miss Wheeler, their governess; and a nice smart girl she was, likewise, though by some four or five years their senior. The Misses Fitzgibbon, moreover, could dash after the hounds, on horseback, in first-rate style; and went out fox-hunting nearly as regularly as their father,—who, indeed, never missed a day of the season, except when he was laid up with a fit of the gout.

There were all kinds of sports for ever going on at Ballywalterbeg; for no man in the barony kept what was called a more “ratling house,” than did Ned Fitzgibbon. At the Christmas-eve of which I am about particularly to speak, there were assembled at Mr. Fitzgibbon’s a smaller party than usual, consisting only of four guests,—one of whom I happened to be. We were nearly entire strangers to each other; but the easy and convivial manners of our host made us feel like old acquaintances before the dinner-cloth was removed: and the frankness and good humour of the Misses Fitzgibbon admirably supported their father’s hospitality; while Miss Wheeler was so much at her ease, that no one would ever have suspected her of being that piece of icy propriety called a governess. She was full of whim and fun,—a laughter-loving wench.

Odd as the statement may appear, it nevertheless is a fact, that the name of one of Mr. Fitzgibbon's guests, upon this occasion, was unknown to him. This guest was a young officer of dragoons, who had arrived the day before, at the neighbouring village, in command of the new detachment to be quartered there. According to the custom, Mr. Fitzgibbon called at the barrack, and introduced himself as the owner of the Ballywalterbeg House; pointed out its long avenue of leafless elm-trees, and concluded with "Our hour is six—I shall hope for the pleasure of your company at dinner, Mister Officer:—a turkey, and an excellent haunch, which I pledge you my honour as a gentleman, has hung a fortnight."

The young officer politely declined the invitation, as it was necessary that he should remain to see his men properly established in their new quarters.

"Well, well, Mister Officer, to-morrow will just be the same thing; we shall expect you at Ballywalterbeg to-morrow—at six, remember."

"And what's his name, papa?" inquired Miss Fitzgibbon, when informed by her father that he had invited the new dragoon officer from the village.

"I can't tell you, my dear, and for the best of reasons, I don't know."

"Then how did you ask him, pa?—what did you say?—how did you address him, I mean?"

"Pooh, my dear there was no difficulty in that—what signifies his name?—I called him Mister Officer."

"But that was not very polite, you know, pa?"

"Polite, child; never mind that—what does a dragoon care for politeness? as my great-grand-uncle, Sir Teigue O'Regan, said. Six o'clock, and you'll see the polish of his boots will be under the polish of my mahogany. I have asked him to dinner, that's all, and you can ask him his name, Betsey, to-morrow, if you want to know it."

Although the other guests which met "Mister Officer" at dinner on Christmas-eve, were not so entirely strangers to Mr. Fitzgibbon, he knew little about them. A Mr. Smith, who had been introduced to him by letter from an old college acquaintance, as "an English gentleman, making a pleasure-tour in Ireland, and on his way to

Killarney;" had been an inmate of the hospitable mansion of Ballywalterbeg for more than two months, in consequence of a drunken post-boy having upset the chaise employed by Mr. Smith to convey him to Mr. Fitzgibbon's. So much injury did the tourist sustain, that it was nearly five weeks before he was sufficiently recovered to leave the chamber in which he had been placed on the night of the accident. During this tedious confinement, every possible attention was shown to the invalid by the Fitzgibbons—father and daughters; and when Mr. Smith was able to join the family circle in the drawing-room of Ballywalterbeg House, he naturally felt most grateful to his kind host and the young ladies.

"Now you are on your pins again, my boy," said Mr. Fitzgibbon, "and Dr. Fogarty has put all to rights, the best thing you can do, is just to stay where you are, and to see in Christmas with us. Killarney, every one knows, is nonsense in December, and we'll show you some rare sport; I give you my word, Tipperary's the place for that."

Thus was Mr. Smith prevailed upon to prolong his stay to "over the Christmas holidays." Indeed, Ballywalterbeg was so pleasant a house, and there was, as we said, always so much amusement going forward, and such a constant round of company, that it was impossible to feel a dull hour there. It was not very difficult therefore to persuade a guest unfettered by urgent business to remain. "I should like," he observed, "to see how you keep your Christmas in Ireland, and with what ceremonies——"

"Oh," said Mr. Fitzgibbon, "as to ceremonies, the way we observe Christmas ceremonies in Tipperary is by using no ceremony at all—

'Hospitality, no formality, all reality,
Here you'll ever see.'

We'll just have Fogarty, and any one else that may happen to drop in by way of a god-send to us,—the more the merrier; though there are few who have a

•

roof at all over their heads that will turn shulers* at Christmas."

"I am much obliged to the doctor for his attention to me," remarked Mr. Smith.

"Oh, he's an excellent fellow—there's no better companion any where—New brooms, you know;—for to say the truth, I don't know much about Fogarty; he only settled in our village a few days before your unlucky upset. Nelly Cusack did all the doctoring of the parish until he came, and for my part I believe she is just as clever; but, you see, as Fogarty was a good name once in these parts, for the sake of old times, I just asked the doctor to come up and spend his evenings over a cool bottle at Ballywalterbeg, and an excellent companion he makes——"

"Rather silent, I think," observed Mr. Smith.

"All the pleasanter for that," returned Mr. Fitzgibbon, emphatically, "he'll sit till midnight listening to your stories, and never once contradict you, nor will he ever give you the trouble of asking him to fill his glass."

It is strange that a party so oddly composed, and brought together by mere accident, should amalgamate so well, but the harmony was perfect. Never did a company dove-tail into good fellowship more speedily, and never did I enjoy an evening more than that of Christmas-eve at Ballywalterbeg House, in the sweet county of Tipperary. At the head of the dinner-table sat Miss Fitzgibbon, upon whose right hand was placed the young officer, and I had the honour of sitting on the damsel's left. Miss Wheeler, the governess, was on my left; with Dr. Fogarty interposed between her and Mr. Fitzgibbon, who occupied the foot of the table, the balance of which was preserved by Mr. Smith and Miss Margaret Fitzgibbon,—the two young ladies thus flanking "Mr. Officer" right and left.

I will not detain my reader by attempting any account of the many pleasantries which enlivened that dinner.

* Beggars who go from house to house. The name Shulers is commonly given in the south of Ireland to droppers-in at meal-times.

It has been already stated, that before the cloth was removed, we all felt like old friends, although some of us then met for the first time. We chatted and joked with ease and cordiality, the doctor alone preserving his habitual silence; but his nods and smiles evinced that his heart was with us, and that if he did not take part in the conversation, he thoroughly enjoyed it.

After the ladies had withdrawn, Dr. Fogarty, looking at Mr. Fitzgibbon, gravely said, his hand grasping the claret-pitcher, "Sir, may I be allowed——"

"A toast, doctor?—by all means—gentlemen, a bumper to Dr. Fogarty's toast—this is Christmas-eve——"

"I thought you had all forgotten it," retorted the doctor; "here's 'THE MISLETOE BOUGH.'"

We all drained our glasses to so seasonable a toast.

"But you say, doctor," remarked Mr. Smith, "'here's the misletoe,' where is it, I ask?"

The doctor, who had, before dinner, slyly suspended a garland of it in the room, answered this question by an elevation of his brows, followed by a movement of his eyes, a fling of his head on one side, and an indescribable toss of the thumb of his left hand towards the door, above which appeared hanging, what had before escaped observation, a large bunch of misletoe.

"And the birds are flown!" exclaimed the young dragoon.

"We may trap them yet," observed Mr. Smith.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Fitzgibbon, "fair play is a jewel; do what you will, wherever I have control, in a fair and honourable way. I'm a true sportsman, and will have no traps, mind that. You may shoot as much of my game flying, as you can, and welcome, but no netting. So here's fair play all the world over. 'Tis all an Irishman wants."

After the discussion of a sufficient quantity of wine and nuts, we adjourned to the ladies and coffee; and, as each gentleman made his exit from the dining-room, it was evident that he took care to satisfy himself of the exact position of the doctor's misletoe bough. We found the young ladies warbling like nightingales a duet

out of Tom Moore's Irish melodies ; a song or two followed, and then some one proposed a dance, as it was Christmas-eve.

"But the new Brussels carpet, pa?" whispered Miss Fitzgibbon.

"What of that?" asked her father; "is a new carpet to stop your dancing, girls?"

"We may as well dance in the dining-room, you know, pa," said Miss Margaret.

"And there's blind Terry, the piper, in the kitchen," chimed in Miss Wheeler; "he plays jigs to perfection."

"Well, girls, I have always guided you with a loose rein, so have your own way, and see what will come of it. But Flaherty had better be told to clear away the table." So saying, Mr. Fitzgibbon rung the bell, ordered the dining-room to be prepared for dancing, blind Terry to be sent in; "and hark'ee, Flaherty," he continued, "just throw on the fire the root of that old thorn-tree, which I grubbed up, and told them to put by in the turf-house."

"The root of the fairy tree, sir?" said Flaherty.

"Yes;—I'll give you a Yule clog, Mr. Smith, for, as you are curious about Christmas customs, I suppose you'd scarcely think it Christmas-eve without one. Not a labourer in the parish could I get to put spade or axe to that old stump against which the post-boy drove your chaise, so, as I was determined that it should never upset another chaise, I just went to work and grubbed it up myself; and, whether it was owing to the fairies or the exercise, I know not, but I have escaped a fit of the gout, which usually visits me at this season."

Flaherty soon returned to announce that the dining-room was ready for dancing.

"Now, girls, don't blame me," said Mr. Fitzgibbon, nodding his head significantly; "take your own way, and you'll see what will come of it."

"You can't be so old-fashioned, pa, as to think seriously about the fairy-tree?" observed Miss Fitzgibbon, playfully.

"Beside, 'twas you desired it to be put on the fire, pa," said Miss Margaret Fitzgibbon.

"'Tis Christmas-eve, my dears," was Miss Wheeler's comment, "and your father is alarmed at the terrible bullaboos which they say are abroad; it was only the other day that I read in some old book, as a reason for all the church bells being rung on this night—what they call 'pealing in Christmas,'—that it was to scare away such 'grisly bugs.'"

"Will you allow me?"—said the young dragoon, offering his arm, which Miss Fitzgibbon mechanically accepted.

"And I'll go and open the door," exclaimed Mr. Smith.

"Oh! don't trouble yourself," shouted the doctor.

And away they strode across the hall to take up their positions behind the dining-room door.

Just as the young soldier had accurately ascertained that the innocent lips of the unsuspecting Miss Fitzgibbon were precisely under the misletoe bough, he saluted his fair partner, and, in the next moment, pointing upward, cried with an air of triumph, "England expects that every man will do his duty."

"But 'tis no apology, sir, for a bristling mustachio," said Miss Fitzgibbon, first smiling, and then drawing herself up with a dignified air.

"What does he mean?" inquired Miss Margaret, who was in the back-ground, looking with astonishment at her father; but she was answered merely by a good-humoured laugh, which gave her confidence to advance, and she received the same mark of regard from Mr. Smith, who sprung from his hiding-place behind the door.

"Sir,—Mr. Smith—really, sir,"—stammered Miss Margaret, but her sister motioned her to be silent, and Miss Wheeler, not knowing, it is to be presumed, exactly what was going forward, but perceiving that something unusual was the matter, sprung literally into the open arms of Doctor Fogarty, who had silently watched her movements through the chink of the door, and, admirably calculating distances, received her with

such a smack of his lips upon her right cheek, that there was no mistake about the matter—in return for which civility poor Fogarty was rewarded by an almost simultaneous slap, of more than equal sound and vigour upon his right cheek from the left hand of the agile Miss Wheeler.

“Here’s a pretty scene?—but I did my duty—I warned you, girls,” said Mr. Fitzgibbon, convulsed with laughter, as, arm in arm, we followed the party into the dining-room, where hung the misletoe bough which had occasioned all this confusion. However, the sweet pipes of blind Terry, with the violin accompaniment of his son, a fine lad of about fourteen, and the bright blaze of the Yule Clog soon caused the misletoe frolic of the evening to be forgiven at least, if not forgotten. It was nearly midnight when Flaherty the butler entered the room, and going up to “Mister Officer,” who was just then engaged in dancing “cover the buckle” with Miss Wheeler, said, “There’s a dragoon, sir, has brought a letter express for your honour from the village.”

“Why surely it can’t be—’tis impossible,” muttered Mr. Fitzgibbon, his voice gradually becoming louder, “that the Whiteboys are out to-night,—’tis only a false alarm, depend on it; and if ’tis some blackguard gauger or other, why just let him wait; what business has any gauger to disturb a gentleman who is dining at Bally-walterbeg? You are a new comer in these parts, and these fellows will just tease the life out of you and your men, Still-hunting.—Just let the dragoon come in, Flaherty—I’m a Justice of the Peace, and you must be guided by what the bench says.”

The young soldier bowed assent to magisterial authority, and the dragoon was ushered in. After making the usual military salaam to his officer, he got himself into a corner of the room, and, unbuckling his snow-covered helmet, took out of it a letter which he presented in an embarrassed way, eyeing all the time most wistfully the blazing fire, the piper, the jug of whisky-punch which stood beside him, the pretty girls, and their merry partners.

"Will you excuse me?" said the officer to Mr. Fitzgibbon.

"Oh certainly—of course. Here, Flaherty, get the dragoon a glass of whisky-punch, screeching hot—it must snow smartly—but Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without snow."

"How did this letter come, Wilkinson?" inquired his officer.

"By express from Caher, sir; Reynolds, the express, says that the first division has marched for Cork, and that the second will follow at daylight in the morning."

"That will do—return as quickly as you can—tell Sergeant Johnson to put the men in readiness to move immediately for head-quarters."

The dragoon bowed, waved his hand again in the same military fashion, and backed out of the room.

"Mr. Fitzgibbon," said the young officer, "I cannot tell the cause of this sudden movement of our regiment, especially as negotiations for peace have been entered into with America; but as a soldier, I am bound to obey without question. As our acquaintance has been short, a long speech, if there was time for one, would be misplaced. I will, therefore, only say, that I most heartily thank you—and that I shall ever remember the hospitable county of Tipperary. To you, young ladies, by one of whom I hope my Christmas impertinence may be pardoned, I bid a respectful and reluctant good night. May a merry Christmas be yours—" the speaker's voice faltered. "God bless you all"—he added, and, after extending his right hand to Mr. Fitzgibbon, who shook it warmly, he quitted the room.

"Poor fellow!" said Mr. Fitzgibbon, "he has a heart, and that's a rare thing for an Englishman. I crave your pardon, Mr. Smith; I did not mean to say that Englishmen are not right good fellows at bottom, when you know them; but you see they have not the thick warm Irish blood in their veins, and so they fairly freeze into friendship."

"O, I understand you," replied Mr. Smith, with a good-humoured smile; "Christmas is the very season to make an Englishman's friendship according to your

account; but I think spring, summer, or autumn, you'd find no difficulty in doing that at Ballywalterbeg."

"I don't know about spring and summer," was Mr. Fitzgibbon's remark, "though there's fair trout-fishing enough; but in autumn—that's the grouse season—remember you promised at dinner, and so has that young officer, to shoot grouse with me on the Galtees next year—but, may be, the poor young fellow, if he is really going on foreign service, may get winged himself."

Christmas morning found a neatly folded letter on the breakfast-table at Ballywalterbeg, addressed to "— Fitzgibbon, Esq." It was from the young dragoon officer, repeating his farewell of last night, and subscribing himself Mr. Fitzgibbon's "sincerely obliged and humble servant"—"What?" said Mr. Fitzgibbon, and he hesitated—"I can't read the fellow's name."

"Let me see, pa," said Miss Fitzgibbon, anxiously.

"Why, Betsey, you see you can make nothing of it."

"Let me try"—said Margaret—"Charles—no that's an L—Lovel—no that's a T, and that's a P—Peter—but there are three letters more or something like them."

"Is it Peterkin Madge?" inquired Miss Wheeler.

"What a bother you make about the puppy's name," said Mr. Fitzgibbon; "give me a cup of coffee, Bet, love;—what signifies any man's Christian name—let me see if I can make out his surname—no, I'll be hanged if I can—I wonder if he ever learned to write?"

"But an Army List will show at once," observed Mr. Smith.

"Ay, so it will to be sure; we'll send for one to Tipperary the moment Tom Cahill comes back from first mass. Here's half-a-crown, Flaherty, for Cahill to pay for it; and let him mind that he does not come back without one."

Away went Tom Cahill, but no Army List was there to be purchased in all Tipperary; the messenger could only obtain the information that he might probably be able to procure one in Cashel; so having ridden eight miles to Tipperary, he set out from thence to Cashel, eleven miles further, and, after a journey of nearly forty

miles in quest of an Army list, Tom Cahill returned to Ballywalterbeg bringing with him an Almanac, which was the only book he could get like an Army list in Cashel, and the intelligence that one could not be got nearer than Dublin.

The consequence was that the name of "Mister Officer" remained a complete riddle up to the time of Mr. Smith's departure for Dublin on his return to England, and as I left Ballywalterbeg House on the same day for Cork, it is impossible for me to detail occurrences there so minutely as I have done; but my inquiries after the members of the little circle of which I formed a part on Christmas-eve, enable me to state, an Army List was sent from Dublin by Mr. Smith to Mr. Fitzgibbon. It was accompanied by four parcels, one of which was addressed to Doctor Fogarty; the other three cases contained valuable sets of ornaments, and were respectively addressed to the Misses Fitzgibbon and their governess, "with Lord B—'s compliments, and grateful recollection of their kind attentions to the invalid *Mr. Smith*." A letter to Mr. Fitzgibbon informed him, that the writer, having a large estate in Ireland, and being displeased with the accounts he had received of his agent's conduct, had determined to satisfy himself of the justice of such complaints as well as of the state of the country, by actual inspection; and had, therefore, kept his visit a profound secret, and travelled under the assumed name of Smith, taking with him only a few letters of recommendation to some of the resident gentry by whom he could not be recognised. His lordship added, "Having now let you into my secret, I will tell you another—so much pleased am I with Ireland, and so much at home did I feel at Ballywalterbeg, even under the distressing circumstances which compelled me to be your guest, that I do not mean to forget your invitation to shoot grouse on the Galtees in August next.

"I have ventured to enclose small tokens of my gratitude for your fair daughters and Miss Wheeler. The case for Miss Margaret Fitzgibbon contains a golden sprig of mistletoe with pearl berries, which you may tell her I have been at some trouble to get made for her; but,

as I shall not readily forget our merry Christmas-eve at Ballywalterbeg House, I hope this ornament may keep it in her remembrance also. 'To Doctor Fogarty I request you will present, with my regards, the snuff-box I have addressed for him:' which, we may add, much to the doctor's astonishment, who had been already liberally feed, contained a bank note for fifty pounds.

"Now, hang me!" said Mr. Fitzgibbon, "had I any notion that I was entertaining an English nobleman, I would not have been half so civil. I want no return for what Ballywalterbeg House affords."

In the same hospitable spirit did Mr. Fitzgibbon continue to keep it up; and, about six months from the date of the commencement of my story, the letters, which arrived twice a-week, and were dropped at the end of the avenue by the Tipperary post-boy, being placed on the breakfast-table, there appeared one written on thin paper with a foreign post-mark. This was a rarity in those days, and Mr. Fitzgibbon, taking it up, looked at it, first on one side, then on the other, scanned with his eye the address, looked at it again, examined the seal for a moment, then broke it. It was dated "22d June, 1815," the writer spoke of the glorious victory, which the combined armies, under the Duke of Wellington had obtained—of the flight of Napoleon—the death of the gallant Picton, and that the consequence of the battle would probably be the restoration of peace to Europe: that his regiment had behaved admirably, and in two brilliant charges, had covered themselves with glory; although their loss was severe—that the captain of his troop had been killed, to the command of which he had succeeded, "and as it is very likely," continued the writer, "we shall now speedily return to England, it is not impossible I may be able to accept your invitation to shoot game with you on the Galtee mountains, which, I am sure, will be much better sport than shooting Frenchmen on the plains of Waterloo. I beg you will make my respects to the young ladies, who, I hope, are quite well, and I have only to observe, for the information of Miss Fitzgibbon, whose horror at my mustachio, on the memorable evening of the misletoe adventure, I have not forgotten, that

the only mischance I encountered was the loss of that identical mustachio, which was completely singed off by the pistol of a French rascal which providentially only flashed in my face."

All this was perfectly legible, but, although the name of the writer remained a complete riddle, no one at the breakfast-table of Ballywalterbeg could doubt from whom it came.

"'Tis scandalous," said Mr. Fitzgibbon.

"So provoking, too," observed Miss Fitzgibbon.

"'Tis ridiculous," remarked Miss Margaret.

"I'm quite curious to know," added Miss Wheeler.

"Well, well, girls, the grouse season is at hand, and then I'll give a sound lecture to this Mr. Officer, I promise you, for his affectation."

"It's the only thing disagreeable about him," was Miss Fitzgibbon's comment, blushing like a summer rose.

On the eve of the first day of grouse shooting, Lord B——'s travelling carriage, with four horses, went spanking down the avenue of Ballywalterbeg, and nearly overturned a Cashel post-chaise, out of one window of which the captain's head protruded, and his gun case from the other.

"Holloa, Mr. Smith," cried he, as Lord B——'s positions pulled up for a moment.

"Stop," said his lordship, who recognised at a glance the nameless hero of Christmas-eve and getting out of his carriage, stepped into the post-chaise. "So here we are again, at the hospitable mansion of Ballywalterbeg, both with the same object, I presume."

Their object was indeed the same, although it was not exactly grouse-shooting; and yet the objects of that object were as different as two birds flying in opposite directions; for the captain came to declare his attachment to Miss Fitzgibbon, and Lord B—— appeared as the suitor of her sister.

In a few weeks matters were arranged to the satisfaction of all parties, and the Tipperary Free Press newspaper announced, under the head of Marriages in *High Life*: "Yesterday, by special license, at Ballywalterbeg

House, the Right Hon. Lord B——, to Miss Margaret Fitzgibbon, second daughter of Edmund Fitzgibbon, Esq.,—the ceremony was performed by His Grace the Archbishop of Cashel.—At the same time and place, Captain the Hon. Charles Augustus Frederick Fitzackerly, of the — Dragoons, to Miss Fitzgibbon, eldest daughter of Edmund Fitzgibbon, Esq.”

There was a third marriage on the same day, which was also chronicled in the Tipperary Free Press, but in smaller type. It ran thus,—“Yesterday, Theophilus O’Fogarty, Esq. M. D., the lineal descendant of the chiefs of that ancient name, to Miss Maria Jane Wheeler, fourth daughter of the late Rev. John Wheeler, and grand-niece to the late General Sir James Wheeler.”

Of the “sayings and doings” upon this happy day, all that we have been able to collect are the two following trivial anecdotes. Miss Fitzgibbon insisted upon her husband writing his name legibly to the record of their marriage, which he promised to do, “as plain as print;” jocosely observing, that if ever he wished for a divorce, he could get a thousand witnesses to swear it was not his autograph. And the old nurse of the family, whose reverence for ancient customs was always profound, now became doubly superstitious. On the day of these happy events she went about gossiping with every one that came in her way. “’Twas all of the misletoe,” she said, “that they had such grand doings at Ballywatterbeg, this blessed day;”—and that one of her young Missus was a real lady all out, and the other had made such a grand match of it. “Sure ’twas I reared them both, and ’twas myself that gave that tongue-tied rogue of a doctor the misletoe bough to hang up at Christmas-eve—and sure didn’t he get a wife through the means of it himself? and they may all thank me for putting him up to it, and ’tis I that ought to be a proud woman!”

The comment of Cæsar the great house-dog, and a cockney by birth, upon these unwonted proceedings, which drew together the people of at least twenty parishes, was—

Bow—vow—vow—vow—vow!

BOOKS AND THE LOVERS OF THEM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SKETCHES IN CORFU,"
"EVENINGS ABROAD," ETC.

BLESSED be books, and the writers thereof! Is a man sick? These silent people will comfort, and not condole with him. Is a man sullen? They will amuse, without irritating him. Is he somewhat out of sorts with fortune? They will entertain, without expecting to be entertained in return. Blessed be letters and the inventors thereof! The tomb of him who first conceived the idea of "stopping the flying sound," ought to have been preserved, garlanded with laurels, and watered by the tears of every generation, until this present day.

It is a pleasant morning in the early spring, and we ramble forth, directly after breakfast. There has been a gentle shower in the night, and it hath called forth all the fragrance of the young grass, and of the scarcely peeping flowers. A proper day for a long, long walk; nay, on such a day as this, if the light would but last, we could perambulate the round globe. First of all, we will thread this winding green lane,—a low paling on one side, and a quickset hedge, just bursting into beauty, on the other. The lane itself seems interminable, but down, far away beyond the end of it, a view of exquisite home beauty bursts upon the eye; sloping fields and dark woods, cottages and villas, varying in aspect every instant, as the clouds sweep over them, or as the sun lights them up into brilliancy. A few dark-looking trees and shrubs peep over the paling; and there is one young almond tree, in the first flush of its rosy beauty, which, standing out from among them, bare itself of foliage, shows all the lovelier for the contrast. Then come fields, one after another, in

almost endless succession; and quaint old-fashioned stiles, and hedge-rows, and banks, bedropped with violets and primroses, offering the fairest of all possible pictures, to an English eye. And all the time the clear bright air plays about one's forehead, and the singing birds pour forth their little souls in song. It is impossible to proceed: here is a most comfortable seat under a hawthorn, rich in blossom and perfume: we must rest awhile.

And now that we have ceased to watch the smoke, curling upwards from the midst of that tiny grove, and have listened to the bird on yonder bough, till his note is "a thrice told tale," and have counted the young lambs, and tied up the flowers, what shall we do—how add to our enjoyment?—A book!—Ay, give us Howitt, or White, or Jesse. Well is it for those who love to while away the sunny hours in shaded nook, or in the grassy path, that others there are, blest with keener perception, and more unwearied patience, who also retire from the broad busy paths of life, to cultivate intimacy with the lesser parts of creation, and who disdain not to communicate the results of their researches to the idlers of their caste.

Or, suppose it is winter,—dark, dismal, cheerless winter; not a clear, frosty, joyous morning, but one of those days in which a man feels himself irresistibly impelled to believe in the doctrine of Pythagoras, and to wish for the time when he shall become a cat or a dormouse. There is a thickness in the air, a cold pattering among the leafless branches; nothing to be seen but umbrellas,—nothing to be heard but the click of pattens. N'importe; we must button up our great coat, and sally forth: this day, too, as things generally happen, in this cross-grained weather we have more than our usual share of locomotion to perform,—many a five minutes' waiting under dripping eaves, many a weary paddle up and down Chancery lane, and the pleasant branches from that goodly highway. Then the high, upright desk, the long pages of cramp words to write and indite! Well, the only thing to be done, is, to face the evils incident to this life manfully, and to quote, as often as we may spare the time, that pleasantest of old saws, "Time and the tide wait

for no man." And the heavy hours do pass, and the little piece of Genevese workmanship on the mantel-piece, does, at last, sing forth, with golden tongue, those four notes, which bear to us the signification of, "Open Sesame!" The great book is closed, drawers and doors are duly locked, and forth we sally homewards, to enjoy a good fire, and a good dinner, with a relish, all the keener it may be, for the hard labour, bodily and mental, the toil in which we have been immersed.

Then comes the rosiest of the rosy hours, the one hour worth all the other three-and-twenty, the quiet hour in the sanctum sanctorum. Surely the crimson damask curtains wear a brighter glow, the fire, of course, is at its brightest,—nay, even the ugliest of all ugly monsters that the East ever exported, grin and stare on the shelf, with a look of quiet content. The sofa is so downy, the ottoman so exactly placed,—what more can we want?—No society,—no, no; no troop of noisy, chattering acquaintances, calling themselves friends, shall intrude on this one hour, sacred to tranquillity;—yet something is wanted. Ay, draw aside that drapery that shields my treasures from the sun, and dust of daylight; there stand the silent people;—the inhabitants of that other world, as real, as palpable, and far less troublous than this. We will nought of natural philosophy, nor theology, nor metaphysics,—no, indeed, nor political economy after dinner; but something of a lighter strain,—a lady; a poetess, —Hemans, the touching, and refined; Baillie, or Landon? —Yes, we will bury ourselves in her sweet pages,—we will wander with her over sunny Italy; we will live over again with her those youthful days, when we also looked into blue eyes, and fancied they would never grow dim—on round, peach-like cheeks, whose beauty we deemed,—Heaven help our innocence!—as immortal as our own admiration of them. Yes, we will ramble with her among lovely forms and bright flowers, and time-honoured ruins, until we fancy, once again, the earth an Eden, and forget, all the while, that the Thyrsa, who personified our young dream of love and beauty, sits below-stairs, mending stockings for seven boisterous boys above.

But if books are suitable in every changing season of

the year, they are not less so to every changing season of life,—even to youth and age,—although youth has its own joys of hope and novelty, and age its own pleasure of quiet rest. Books are good for young and old, but to middle life they are absolutely necessary. Youth has its delights; but manhood,—alas! the hand trembles, and the very heart sickens, as, turning over, leaf by leaf, the volume of human life, we behold, thicker and faster, on every page, the records of disappointed hopes,—lacerated feelings,—busy toils,—and pining regrets. We cannot bid the heart grow young again: as well might the earth remain unchanged by the storms that pass over it, desolating its surface and rending its interior, as the human heart remain unchanged, unblighted, unwithered, by the storms of passion, of affections excited, cherished, betrayed, forgotten. We cannot love or trust again, when once we have learned,—and bitter is the knowledge,—that friends change, forget, die: we do not care to make new ones; trust has been betrayed, and affection slighted too often for that. The warmth of our own feelings has passed away,—we cannot recall it; as well might we hope to recall the rainbow to the clear bright sky when the storm-drops have all departed. What then shall avail to cheer the heavy-footed time? 'Those silent folk again! Ay, they will not deceive; they will call up vivid pictures of what has been; we may traverse with them not only all space, but all time; we may dwell awhile with the nomadic tribes under an Arab tent, or chase the red deer with merry Robin Hood, or break a lance in the chivalrous court of the gallant Francis. Nay, our own mighty magician will even show us a new order of things, and teach us how to skim the blue air with Ariel, or tread the intricacies of a haunted forest glade with that little essence of all fun and frolic, Puck, and his boon companions Moth and Mustard Seed.

But by-and-by, some secondary cause stops the quick circulation of the blood, the limbs lose their activity, disease lays her strong hand upon the lover of nature: he may roam over heathery-hill and through the daisy-besprinkled valley no more. Morn, noon, evening, bring to him no change of scene, no change of position; day

after day, and week after week pass on, and behold him chained to his weary, weary couch. Perchance, too, he is a stranger in a far-off land;—vainly he turns his tearful eyes to the opening door; the mother who would have pillowed his aching head on her own fond bosom, is not there. Vainly he yearns after the soft tones of his young sister's voice,—that fond, that innocent sister!—When he hears the distant echoing of a light merry laugh, he half rises from his resting-place, and listens eagerly, but she is not there. What then? Shall he waste the long hours in fruitless repining—shall he increase the fever of his body by the fevered regrets of the spirit? Shall he look out when the setting sun gilds the purple hills, with feelings of despair, because he may not view them from the rose-tinted lake, or from a neighbouring mountain-top? Shall he throw angrily away the dark blue violets, and laughing daisies, and fair white hyacinths which strew his couch, and transform it almost into a bower of fragrance, because he did not himself explore the low dingle, and hidden brook-side, and fern-clad slope, whence the pretty wanderers came, and himself pluck them while the morning dew yet glittered on their soft petals? Not so; our invalid loves books; he shall collect around him, now in the dark hours, friends who will not reproach him for his past neglect.

First, he will poetize: he will read the fanciful imagery of one, who, like himself, loved the by and sheltered nooks; and he will recall his own experience of May mornings and twilight rambles, and pause awhile in his reading, to see whether star and flower and winged insect suggested to himself the same thoughts, and awoke the same feelings as they did in him over whose page he bends.

He will open some volume of grave, stern reasoning, which shall bring all his own mathematical powers into play. Some error shall be amended, or some doubt cleared up, which has long impeded the progress of his search after truth.

Then he will read a tale of some young enthusiastic spirit, which vowed itself to the high, but futile task of snatching a laurel leaf from the dark stream of oblivion,

whereon to inscribe, in fading characters, a perishing name.

Or haply he will take up a story of some gentle heart that went on its pilgrimage, asking but one boon ; looking on earth for that flower that blooms only in Paradise,—pure and unselfish love ;—an idle tale,—a yet idler record ; but not without interest for him who reads, for he too has had his dream—his hope ; and though stern experience soon aroused him from the one, and time, sterner still, has shown him the fallacy of the other, he ponders over the page with something of the same sweet, yet melancholy feeling which animates the old man, wearied with travel, and sick at heart, who revisits, after long, long years, the haunts of his childhood. What if these reminiscences call forth tears and sighs ? Nay, then our invalid must converse with another friend. He cannot taste the full freshness of the rich sunny air that streams through the narrow casement ; pine-wood, and lake, and forest are forbidden haunts to him. Well, then, he will send his spirit on a yet farther travelling. He will ramble with Irving over the wide enamelled prairie ; he will cross the Atlantic with Hall, or traverse the sandy desert with Lander ; he will enjoy their excitement, share their discoveries, while he is spared their fatigues ; and thus, with one and another merry comrade, the long days glide insensibly away—until the thin, transparent hand can no longer perform its office of turning the pleasant leaves ; until aching head, and faintly-labouring pulse, and fading, uncertain breath proclaim that even this light labour must be laid aside. What comfort then remains for the poor sufferer ? Weeks may yet elapse ere the lamp of life be quite extinguished. Though eloquence has lost its charm, and the spell of poetry is broken ; though tales of travel, and tales of life show now one melancholy prospect,—that of fellow-pilgrims hastening alike to the same inevitable bourne,—shall he, therefore, consume the hours in solitary grief ?

There is a Book whose characters have been traced by the finger of Omniscience,—whose records contain an undying history of Divine love, and Divine mercy,—whose pages are illuminated by a portraiture of the paths

we must traverse, and the perils we must shun, in our journey, through a waste-howling wilderness, towards the mansions of eternal bliss. This blessed volume breathes forth words of consolation to him whose weary ears can drink in no other music,—words of hope to him for whom even the dearest interests of life are fast becoming a faint, and dim, and fading vision of the past. Though every limb may ache, though his eyes can no longer endure the sun's rays, and his very heart be sick with suffering, he loves to hear of the flowing golden rivers, and fair blooming islets, and quiet green pastures of that peaceful home, to which he is fast hastening. Though he be alone in a far land, sad and desolate, yet will he rejoice; for soon, right soon, he will wander beside the rivers of Paradise, with those dearly loved ones who vanished so early from his side on earth, and whose death first made him feel, and rejoice in the feeling, that he too was mortal. Yes, he will rejoin them in that region where parting, and sighs, and tears are unknown. He doubts not of the bliss that awaits him, for the voice that reads beside his lowly pallet the words of the blessed Book, pronounces with firm and unfaltering accents—"Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved;" and the sufferer even knows, and triumphs in the knowledge, that not on his own sufferings, not on his own merits will he rely for pardon and peace,—but on the sufferings and merits of One whose fairest and most endearing appellation to the sons of sin is—THE REDEEMER. Death comes,—but how arrayed? He is the herald of good tidings;—the guide over the dark river which separates Time from Eternity;—the key by which the golden doors are opened;—the angel on whose wings the freed spirit is borne aloft. Ah! since the days have long since passed away, which beheld the Almighty Creator holding friendly communication with his creatures, by dreams, by Urim, by the prophets,—since no longer the Unseen Presence is made manifest in the still small voice after the calm, or as the voice of a trumpet among thunders and lightnings and thick clouds from the mount,—since no longer the voice of the Lord God is heard walking in the garden in the cool of the day, or calming

the fierce waves with "Peace, be still," how can we be sufficiently thankful that a way has been devised by which the tidings of these great things have been preserved from generation to generation, by which countless ages yet unborn may guide themselves to the home whence their first parents' sin exiled them.

THE LAWSUIT.

BY EDWARD W. COX.

It was on the first market-day after I had commenced practice as a solicitor in a town in the west of England, that, as I was sitting in my office, poring over the learned Essay of Fearne on Contingent Remainders, and prepared to receive those who might honour me with their confidence, I heard a knock at the door, and a slow, heavy step upon the stairs. All who have felt the interest and anxiety with which a young professional man receives the announcement of business, will understand my emotions when the approach of a visiter diverted my thoughts from the abstruse doctrines of Fearne, though not my eyes from his closely printed page; for I deemed that a law-book before me would not at all diminish the confidence of my new client,—if, indeed, such the new comer should prove.

The door opened, and presented to me a farmer,—for such his dress declared him. With much suavity of tone, I entreated him to be seated, and then set myself to hear the case upon which I trusted he was about to consult me. He was a man evidently going down to the vale of life, for his hair was touched with the snows of time, and his face was sunken, and upon it care or years had chiselled many deep hard lines. His countenance betrayed an anxiety which excited in the spectator a feeling of painful interest. A dark eye indicated the strange compound of shrewdness and simplicity so remarkable in the English yeoman. His tall and muscular form was beginning to fade, for it was somewhat bent, and the rounded limbs of youth were yielding to the gauntness of age. His dress was that of the better class of yeomen, only that it presented an appearance of greater neatness,

and more of the fashion of the day than is generally studied by the sturdy agriculturalist. It was evident that he, and those with whom he lived, were not ignorant of the comforts, nay, of the elegances, enjoyed by the middle classes of this country.

His business was soon declared. He had heard that I was intrusted with several sums of money to be advanced on good security. He wanted a few hundreds, and inquired the terms. My clients had resolved to lend only on land. I asked him if he could offer any. I perceived that his countenance fell as I put the question.

"Land!" he said. "Yes, sir; I have an estate, it was my father's before me; but, to be honest with you, the title is disputed. I am even now on the eve of trial."

Further inquiry satisfied me that I could not recommend the loan. I kindly, but frankly told him so. He almost cried. He did not speak for some moments, but sat with his eyes fixed on the fire, and his body waving to and fro in a vain struggle to subdue his emotion. I know not what induced him to unbosom himself to me. Perhaps he gathered from my manner that I sympathized with him. Whatever was his motive, he related to me all his troubles.

His ancestors, I learned, had filled the same station in life with himself. His father farmed his own estate, and transmitted it to him, as he had believed, altogether unincumbered. Shortly before the death of his parent put him in possession of this property, he married an amiable, and, for a farmer's wife, singularly accomplished girl, a governess at a neighbouring school. She had the good sense to accommodate herself to her situation, without altogether abandoning the studies and refinements of her youth. Under her auspices the farm-house assumed a new face: there was a separate table for the parlour and the kitchen, and books and music, for the first time, graced the retired dwelling of Culvers Close. Eight children had blessed their union. Of these, one was in his grave; the others remained at home, educated by the industry and talent of their inestimable mother, who had infused into their young minds the seeds of goodness, trained them in the path of virtue, polished their manners,

and improved their intellects. The eldest was a daughter, named after her mother, Julia; she was grown up to be a useful assistant to the failing energies of her parent; but I gathered that, of late, this favourite child had shown symptoms of disease, which had much alarmed her family. The second was a son, Robert, who aided his father in the management of the farm, and whose taste for study kept him ever at home by the fire-side, after the day's labour was done, gleaning knowledge for himself, or imparting his stores to the younger ones. The other children descended by regular gradations to the little Ellen, who was a rude, romping, black-eyed tomboy, nine years old. Excepting only the loss of their infant, he said, their passage through life had been one of uninterrupted happiness,—happiness too great to be lasting. About twelve months since, he had endured a long and severe sickness, and before he was well enough to resume his daily work, he received notice of an adverse claim to his paternal estate, and, soon after, a declaration in ejectment. His illness had somewhat embarrassed him; but from this he soon would have been released by care and frugality, had not the expenses of the lawsuit added to his burthens. It was to supply the means for trial at the next assizes, that he had asked the loan.

I really felt a great interest in his history, and this probably encouraged him to lay before me the points of law which he understood his case involved. His defence was already entrusted to another attorney, whom he named; he could not, therefore, as he would otherwise have done, place it in my hands; but he entreated me to give him the benefit of my assistance, as far as etiquette would permit, "for," he concluded, "if it be lost, nine of us will be ruined. I shall not have a bit of bread for my children to eat." I promised to give the papers my best attention, and to communicate with his attorney, who, fortunately, was a friend of my own, and, with more cheerfulness, he bade me a good morning, I having agreed to see him at his own house in the course of the ensuing week.

I perused the documents with the greatest care,—I referred to the authorities,—I read all the cases that bore

upon the question, and, though I could find none precisely in point, the result of the inquiry was an impression that the adverse claim was valid. I wrote a long letter to my friend who was conducting the case, apologizing for the interference, but trusting that the deep interest I felt in the issue of the cause, would plead my excuse. I recapitulated to him my own views, and entreated his. By return of post, I received a very kind and considerate reply, assuring me that the writer was delighted to have the aid of another in a matter of so much responsibility. His opinion, which he gave at great length, was certainly more favourable to his client than my own had been, but by no means expressive of confidence in the result. As I had not very much to claim my care, my thoughts and studies were, for some days, devoted to this business.

I did not forget my promised visit. A gloriously bright afternoon invited the most slothful abroad, and I, who love Nature devotedly, could not refuse to pay my court to her on such a day. The farm was situated about four miles from the town, and thitherward I turned my steps, preferring the use of the limbs, which were not given for idleness, to the lazy motion of a carriage. It was the middle of July, and the weather hot and close. I selected a lane so little used, that the grass, long and rank, tufted it all over. A wilderness of flowers waved on the banks on either side of me, and the long branches of the eglantine, intertwining over head, formed a shady and cool verandah for the greater portion of my journey. From this lane, I emerged abruptly upon an extensive prospect, bounded by the hills, and immediately on my right, perched upon a gentle swell of the earth, was the retreat I sought. The little hill, on whose summit it stood, was planted over with flowering shrubs and evergreens. A neat row of poplars towered at its foot, and a few firs and larches gave to the whole an air of gentility seldom seen in the exterior adornments of the residence of the English yeoman. I entered this sweet plantation, and by a path that wound through it in a multitude of mazes, gained the house itself. It was a substantial stone building of an ancient date, and upon the trellis work with

which it was encompassed, were trained the trumpet and the passion flowers, and a magnificent mouthly rose, now in its full bloom. A clean and closely shaven grass-plot surrounded it. The view on all sides was perfectly panoramic, and, at this time, inspired feelings which will be understood by all who have ever gazed upon a neighbouring height on the rich vale of Taunton, in its luxury of corn-fields, and elm groves, and green meadows. But I had not long to feast my grateful eyes on this vision of plenty, for the appearance of my client himself, followed by two of his little ones, diverted my attention. He welcomed me with that cordial hospitality which is common to those who dwell in the country. I was speedily introduced to the home which he had praised from his heart in his interview with me at my Office. He had expected my arrival, and the family were all assembled in the parlour.

The being whose good taste was impressed upon every thing around me, was a mild and lady-like matron, somewhat more advanced in years than her husband. The daughter of whom he had spoken to me with tears, was a lovely girl, full of animation and intelligence; but I saw, or thought I saw, the hectic hue of that blight of youth and beauty, consumption. I sighed as I looked at her. The father perceived my thoughts, and turned to the window. The decorations of the room were simple and elegant; most of them the productions of the various members of the family. Some exquisite paintings in water-colour adorned the walls, a book-case presented the works of our choicest authors, with an excellent selection from modern literature, while a pianoforte, and a flute, showed that the delicate pleasures of music were among the amusements of this interesting family.

I spent a delightful evening, not devoted to the weather or the farm-yard, as in most country homes, or to scandal, as in towns, but passed in rational discourse, diversified by a reluctant display of the musical talents of Robert and Julia, who played and sang together with much taste and skill. A rural repast, laid out on the grass-plot before the door, closed the day. Fruit, a junket and cream, and home-made cakes, tempted me to indulge

in their harmless luxury, and I departed more deeply interested than ever in the fortunes of my host. He accompanied me about a mile, and snatched the opportunity to ask my opinion of his case. I did not wish to cloud the cheerfulness of that day, and evaded the question, but his keen perception was not to be so baffled. "Ah!" he said, "you fear the worst. I know it. Well, God help me and my little ones! *You* will not desert us; the blessing of all that family will be given to you." He paused, and I endeavoured to turn the conversation, by calling his attention to the full moon, which was just peeping above the horizon; but I could not divert his thoughts from his own distresses. "Well, sir," he said, "what do you think of Julia?—Does she not sing sweetly?—She has had no instructor but her excellent mother. The dear girl looked better to-day than she has done for weeks past. But she is ill, very ill: did you hear that cough?—Oh, sir! when I hear that cough, it seems as if a dagger was sent through me." I tried to cheer him, but he would not be comforted.

"Robert is a noble fellow," continued the proud parent, "high-spirited, and yet most gentle. Though he is fond of his books, he does not neglect the farm. In the long winter evenings, he reads and plays to us, and we are so happy! But we may never be so again;—Eh! sir?" I could not speak, and, after a short pause, he continued: "I wish you could see us at our Christmas tea-table; it would do your heart good!—the elder ones at their books or work, my wife teaching the children, and I, a pleased and happy father, smiling to see them so industrious and so affectionate. Ah! sir, it is a proud thing to be a father."

I wrung his hand at parting, and when I entered my lonely chamber, I wished myself a father. I saw him repeatedly at my office, and in his own house, previously to the trial, and the more intimate I became with his family, the more I loved them.

But I noticed at every visit, a change in the health and strength of Julia. She declined daily. They all saw it as well as I, and when the invalid had retired to her

chamber; many a tear was shed by this united family on her account.

The farmer had wrung from me my real opinion of his case, and it was a sad, yet a noble sight, to see how he bore up against the fate which he believed to be coming upon him; how he struggled with sorrow, and made a show of cheerfulness and confidence in the presence of his family. But though the children did not notice his uneasiness of mind, it did not escape the fond care of his wife. She discovered it almost ere it was known to himself; and she had learned my opinion with a firmness which surprised me, then little acquainted with the energy which women often display in the most trying circumstances.

The assizes at length commenced, and I attended my friend to Wells. The night preceding the trial, upon which the fortunes of his family depended, he could not sleep. He repeatedly called me to ask some question, or to remind me of some point which I might have forgotten. I had interested myself so deeply in the case, that my restlessness was scarcely less than his. Before daylight I was up, and in deep consultation with my brother lawyer.

The farmer sat by my side in the court during the trial. He listened intently to every word that dropped from the witnesses: he heard the arguments of counsel as if he understood them. He looked at the jury, and tried to read the character of each, as he entered the box, and pointed out one to me as a benevolent man, and another as a father, who would feel for him and his family; and a third, again, as an unhappy wretch, who could not sympathize with the distresses of the poor. I did not check the old man in these comments, for it was a relief to him from the agitation of suspense. He continually interrupted me in the course of the day, to ask what I thought of the result, but I could offer little hope.

When the judge proceeded to sum up, my client, who was seated immediately under the bench, rose, and leaning over the surrounding heads, listened to the comments of the court. I could perceive the colour come and go

upon his lips and cheeks, as the impartial judge presented the strong and weak points of the case on both sides.

When the jury turned to consider their verdict, the old man resumed his seat; but he did not for a moment revert his eyes from them, and so motionless did he sit, that a stranger would have said, that he was an unconcerned spectator of the scene. But I was so close to him that I could see that his hand grasped the knob of a stout ash-stick so convulsively that the nails were driven into the flesh.

The suspense did not long continue; the jury turned again. I looked at the old man at this moment. He did not move. His breathing was as deep and regular as ever. The associate had left his seat, so that the jury could not deliver their verdict until he returned, and there was an anxious pause for a minute or two. I could scarcely conceal my anxiety, but my client did not move a muscle. At length, a *verdict for the plaintiff*, damages forty shillings, was returned; the counsel coolly took up their briefs to indorse them; the associate called on another cause; the judge eat a bun; none seemed to know or to reflect that the fortunes and happiness of a whole family had been blighted by that verdict.

Nor would they have learned it, but for the ruined man himself. He, regardless of the dignity of a court of justice, spite of my endeavour to keep him down, stood up at the full height of his venerable figure, and before the officers could interfere to silence him, exclaimed,—“My lord, and gentlemen of the jury, I have seven children, and nothing in the wide world but this farm. If you take it from us, we must die or go to the parish, and we would rather die than do that. Pity me, my lord, and do not, O do not ruin us!” He was here silenced by the officers. The judge rebuked us for permitting our client to disturb the proceedings; but we could not restrain him. Exhausted by the intense agony of the day,—by the emotions which he had suppressed,—by this last effort,—the old man swooned, and was carried to the inn like a corpse.

When he recovered, he did not weep nor groan; he scarcely spoke. He thanked me for my attention, and

calmly urged our immediate return home, where he would be expected, and whither he desired first to bear the fatal tidings. It was yet early in the day, and we set forth without delay. Throughout the journey he said little of the past, and seemed as little to dwell upon the future. This quiet, after such a storm, might have appeared to some the composure of resignation; I saw that it was the calmness of despair.

We arrived just as the sun was setting. The whole family had walked out in the road to meet us. Robert was the first to hear our approach, and ran forward; but he soon gathered the truth from my melancholy features. Little was said when the father met his partner and their children. He kissed them all twice, but he did not shed a tear. They wept bitterly. He looked around him vacantly for a few minutes. "These fields are no longer our own. Curses on the fiends!" His wife flung her arms about his neck, and, with sobs and kisses, stifled the curse,—the first that ever came from his lips. He looked upon the group again with the same calm countenance. But suddenly it changed to an expression of horror.

"Where,—where is Julia?" he muttered.

They told him she was too ill to come out to meet him.

"The blight of Heaven is upon me," he said; "that sweet girl will be taken from us;" and for the first time, the feelings of the parent triumphed, and he burst into a sweet and refreshing flood of tears. His heavy heart was relieved.

I shall never forget the scene of that night. The little parlour, the place of so many happy hours, was a sad spectacle. Julia lay on the sofa, gasping for breath, and strove to speak them comfort. Sometimes, for minutes together, not a word was said; they seemed to feel that the roof under which they had dwelt so long, was no more their own. The once social tea was dismissed untasted.

At length, the mother, who had shown more self-command than any of them, said to her husband—"Robert, we have forgotten our duty; we have yet a Friend who will never forsake us,—a Comforter, to whom in sorrow,

we should cry. Robert, my dear Robert, let us all together kneel before God, and ask him to befriend us; Mr. C—— will not object to join us; this is a time of trouble for us all, and the little ones shall pray with us. Heaven will hear the petition of a whole family."

I expressed my readiness to join them in the duty of prayer; the father bowed his head in token of assent. The two youngest children were sitting on his knee, and kissing away his tears; sad themselves, because all around were so. He rose from his seat, took the hand of each, and clasping them between his own, as they knelt by his side, raised them towards Heaven. The mother repeated a prayer aloud,—a prayer evidently dictated by the feelings of the moment. I joined with all my soul. I never felt the beauty and sublimity of prayer so forcibly as I did that night. This duty done, the hearts of all were evidently relieved,—some even began to lay plans for their support, and I left them all calm and resigned. How different was my last visit to that house!

Robert called upon me a few days after, and informed me that his father was more disturbed than ever; that sometimes he imagined that the case was not yet decided, and talked of the trial as something to come. Julia was growing weaker and weaker, and it was feared that she could not live many days longer. From Robert I gathered that he had a double interest in the trial, for upon it depended his union with a girl to whom he had been long attached, but whose company, he would now, friendless and penniless, be forbidden by her calculating father. I admired the young man a thousand times the more that his own sorrows had not been mingled with those of his family. Them he endured in silence; but they were not the less heavy. He bore up against all the crowd of ills, like a manly fellow as he was.

We went together to a neighbouring village to seek a retreat for the exiled family, until some employment could be found for them. We hired neat apartments, and I advised Robert to remove as soon as possible, for I thought that the continual presence of that which must so soon be taken from him, would only add to the misery of his father. He promised to observe my directions.

On the third day after this, he called again, and told me, with tears in his eyes, that Julia was much worse; indeed, that she was now fast sinking into her grave. "She at least, will not live to witness our downfall," he said. "We must endure all. She is happiest." He then informed me that he had attempted to follow my counsel, and to remove the things to their new residence; but his father absolutely forbade him, protesting that there was time enough for that yet,—that he should not quit the estate,—he did not believe he had lost it. The family strove to bend him, but in vain; no entreaties could move him from his purpose. I repeated my advice, and showed the young man a letter, which I had received from the plaintiff's attorney, stating, that if the estate was not given up by a certain day, they should resort to the extremity of the law.

I heard nothing from the farm for nearly a week, and having a leisure afternoon, I resolved to visit the family again, and inquire after their wants. As I approached the house, I could perceive that they had not quitted it, for Julia's canary was suspended from the trellis-work of the window, singing with all his might. But I could not espy, as usual, the children on the grass-plot, or a human form moving among the shrubs. The door was open, and as I paused, I heard the sound of angry voices, and of weeping within; I entered without ceremony, and was instantly attracted, by the continued noise, to the parlour. There the whole family was assembled, and, among them, were two strangers, in whom I instantly recognised the sheriff's officers. The old man had thrown himself into his favourite arm-chair, his countenance pale with rage, and his eye flashing indignation; one of his legs was contracted, the other extended in the attitude of defiance. His wife, kneeling behind him, had flung her arms about his neck, and was sobbing bitterly; the two youngest children, crying also, clung to his knees. The dying Julia, supported in the arms of her brother, gazed at the passing scene with glassy and bewildered eyes, her wasted limbs trembling with terror, and that awful nervousness which often attends consumption. The other children were standing around them, sobbing as if

their little hearts would burst. My entrance was scarcely noticed.

"Come, sir," said one of the officers, civilly enough, "we must do our duty. Don't be obstinate."

"Duty!" exclaimed the father, raising himself in the chair, and looking at the speaker with a frown of contempt; "duty, indeed! Is it your duty to turn an honest man out of house and home,—to send a whole family to the parish? In what page of the Bible do you find that duty written? From this spot I will not stir: earth nor hell shall move me!"

"But the law——" began the bailiff.

"The law! ay, the law!" interrupted the unhappy man: "That cursed law has ruined me; but for the law, I should not be brought to this. The law calls itself the protector of the poor, but it is the weapon of the rich; the law professes to make property secure, but it has taken all from me; the law says that every man's house is his castle; this is *my* house, this is *my* castle, and I dare the first who lifts a finger to force me from it. Here I sit; I am an old man, but at this moment, I have the strength of a giant."

"My dear, dear Robert," sobbed his wife, "let us yield calmly to our fate. Obey the king's servant. Let us leave this house; we can find another home where we may be as happy. With you and our children, all places will be home to us."

"Home! do you say, woman?" he exclaimed, leaning to her with the wildness of a maniac; "Home! is not this our home? I tell you, sirs, that here I was born, and here I will die. On that floor, I first learned to walk; these walls heard my first cries. In that corner my father used to sit and tell me old tales, and there have I sat for twenty years, and repeated the same tales to my children, and yet you ask me to leave it. I love this house, sirs; if it were a living thing, I could not love it more; and shall I desert it in my gray hairs? Oh! no, no, no!" and he threw himself back again into the chair, and was silent.

I here interposed.

"Ah! Mr. C——," he said, "I am glad you are come:

these men want to turn me out of the house. Can't they wait until the trial is over?" Then in a subdued tone, "Do you know when it will come on?"

I saw that his mind was wandering; his affectionate helpmate saw it also. Before I could reply, he continued: "Mr. C——, I wish the judge and jury were here to see the misery they have caused. Mr. C——; I could not bear to part with this estate; I know every bush and every flower upon it. What do you think? I often fancy that the grass is greener here than in all the country round. They have promised to bury me under the great elm; I could not sleep quietly in another soil. I paled off the place, and planted it with laurel, and holly, and primroses; there I will lie, with all my family around me; and there our dust shall mingle together with the dust that was our own. It is a pleasant thought, sir, eh?" and he smiled; but what a smile!

I endeavoured to recall his scattered senses, and explain the law by which he was compelled to yield possession to the rightful owner, but I talked in vain.

"Father! dear father!" said Julia, when I paused, "will you hear your dying girl?"

The old man turned to her a look of childish wonder.

"Father," she continued, "I have not long to live. I have never desired life till now. I could bear to leave you in your happiness, but not in your desolation. Do, dear father, resign yourself to the will of God. He sends afflictions upon us here, to prepare us for bliss hereafter. This has been a long and painful sickness for me; yet I have endeavoured to endure it patiently. Pray, father, pray to Heaven, and all will yet be well; I will pray for you when I am gone away." A fit of coughing prevented her saying more. Her exhausted frame could not endure the struggle, and she fell back upon the pillow in convulsions. The family gathered round her, and even while they looked, she died.

This new affliction diverted their attention from the situation of the father, who still sat there with the same determined air, and listened unmoved to the first wild outpourings of grief from the mother and children. Robert came with his eyes full of tears, and his heart burst-

ing, and took his hand, endeavouring to lead him to the sofa, where was the beautiful, but lifeless form of his daughter; but the old man would not move. He then bent, and whispered into his ear, that Julia was dead.

"Dead!—dead!—dead!" he exclaimed, several times; "Julia dead! Tell me how she is."

"Father, dear father," sobbed the son, "come and see."

"Does she ask for me? Does she want to see me?" he continued: "Here, help me to rise."

With the aid of his eldest son, the miserable father rose, and the group that crowded round the dead Julia, opened to give a passage to the sofa on which she lay. Reason seemed to flash again upon him for a moment, for he gazed earnestly at the lovely mortal frame from which the spirit had so lately fled; he threw himself upon the yet warm clay, and kissed it, and bathed it with his tears; then he rose, and said solemnly, "God's will be done! She was a good daughter, and a kind sister. Heaven has thought fit to take her to itself. She has at least escaped the troubles of this world, and she will not endure the anguish of parting from this place, if indeed the lawsuit be given against us. Let us all kneel; kneel here by her whose soul is in Heaven, and pray for comfort under our afflictions." We knelt, and the father offered up a short prayer, which sank deep into the hearts of all those who heard it.

The fit of phrensy had passed away: he was now tractable as a child. They might lead him where they would; but if the lawsuit was mentioned, he wandered again. The officers had consented to suffer the family to remain until the funeral, but, for the sake of the father's tottering reason, it was determined that they should remove at once. The body of Julia was laid on a bier hastily constructed: I spread over it a heap of flowers; it was borne by four of the workmen, who loved the family in its prosperity, and did not desert it in its day of trial and tribulation. The father, supported, on one side, by his disinherited son—on the other, by the partner of his sorrows, as she had been of his joys, followed the bier, and, after them, the other children tottered from the

threshold of the home that had nursed their infancy, and with which all their dreams of pleasure were blended. I lingered on the grass-plot to watch the melancholy train as it wound down the hill-path. The sun had set; the air was still, and calm, and soft; the evening star hung upon the horizon; the autumn mists were rising up from the meadows. My eyes were full of tears, and the scene danced before me. I saw the procession pass the gate. I noticed that, as they went, each of the exiles turned a last look at the home of their ancestors, and plucked a rose-bud from the bush that arched the entrance. A loud laugh came from the house which had lately witnessed such a spectacle of woe: it proceeded from the men whose calling had hardened them to distress. I turned, sickening, away, and I had shed many tears ere I reached my home.

The further history of this family is brief. I obtained a situation for Robert, who gives much satisfaction to his employers. The indefatigable mother has opened a child's school in the village, and by dint of her own exertions, and the little that Robert can supply, supports her family in respectability, if not in comfort. The father may be seen every day roaming about the fields that were once his own, giving orders to the labourers respecting the fences, or counting the sheep; nor in these harmless amusements is he thwarted by the occupier of the premises, or any of his men, who respect his infirmity, and pity his misfortunes.

I sometimes hear the same slow and heavy step upon my stairs; and the same tall, but now more venerable figure darkens my door. I think it advisable to humour his fancy for awhile, and so he often comes to consult me, with all his former earnestness, about the progress of "The Lawsuit."

AN ADVENTURE WITH AN AMERICAN.

BY W. H. HARRISON.

I HAD been disappointed in love. As sings an old rhyme, which I remember to have met with :

“ My heart was sad,
For the maid was married whom I should have had.”

When I say that it was not my first love, nor my first disappointment in an affair of the heart, I would not that the reader should infer either that I was fickle in my attachments, or that I made love to more than one damsel at a time. On the contrary, I was the most constant and devoted of swains. What Captain Dalgetty was in war, I was in love ; that is to say, true to my colours for the time being ; but it was not my fault if the being of my adoration married another ; and he must have odd notions of propriety who could expect me to love her afterwards.

But, although it was not my first love, I see not why I was less to be pitied on that account ; since, in love, as in the gout, every fresh attack may be more severe than the last ; and thus it was in my case. The man who hangs, drowns, or shoots himself, under such circumstances, is precluded from another chance in the lottery of matrimony ; and, therefore, I did neither. “ There are,” says Winifred Jenkins, or some other classical authority, “ as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it.”

However, I had no special temptation to remain in a circle where I was continually exposed to the mortification of meeting the “ happy pair,” as all newly married persons are styled, and doubtless are, until their first quarrel ; so I resolved to visit the Continent. It is true, I might have attained my object without stirring from my

own country. Like my friend S., I might have buried myself in the heart of the Glamorganshire mountains, and the smoke of forty furnaces; or I might have been equally invisible in the eternal drizzle of the Devonshire hills; but I had a fancy for drinking hock, a favourite wine with me, "in its native purity," and therefore embarked for the Rhine.

Having no notion of travelling *à l'Anglaise*, that is, as if the object were to get over the greatest quantity of ground in the shortest possible space of time, I went up the river, and down the river, and ascended it again; sojourning a day at one spot, and two days at another, and saw all the lions from every point at which they could be viewed.

I had been tarrying a short time at Schaffhausen, when I encountered an old friend, who, like myself, had gone thither to see the falls of the Rhine; but who, on the second day after our meeting, received a summons to join his man of business at Paris. He had with him a light calèche and a pair of English bays, which, being compelled to pursue his journey with all despatch, he could not take with him, and therefore committed to my care; I undertaking to bring them home with me to England. He likewise left with me his postilion, who, a German by birth, was acquainted also with the English language; and whom, independently of his *professional* services, and perfect knowledge of the localities, I found useful as an interpreter, my own Teutonic lore being rather theoretical than practical.

A friend of mine being resident at Stuttgard, I resolved on paying him a visit, which, proceeding by easy stages, with occasional halts of a day, for the purpose of resting my horses, I could well accomplish with the travelling equipage placed at my disposal.

It was on the afternoon of a remarkably fine day, towards the end of the autumn, that, in the prosecution of this plan, I was travelling through the Schwartzwald, or Black Forest. The roads were heavier than I expected to find them, and, accustomed as I had been to the admirable highways of England, I began to find the journey tedious. It wanted but two hours of sunset, and

there were yet some miles between me and the solitary inn in the forest, at which I proposed to halt.

Being naturally anxious to reach my quarters before night-fall, I put my head out of the window, for the purpose of urging on my postilion the expediency of quickening his pace, when my attention was attracted by the sight of a travelling-carriage, nearly overturned, by the road-side. It had, apparently, been drawn by two horses, one only of which was visible, and that, disengaged from the vehicle, was grazing on a little patch of greensward beneath the trees.

The only human being on the spot was a young man, probably not more than four or five-and-twenty. He was somewhat above the middle height; athletically, yet not inelegantly formed. His hair was light, and slightly curled; his complexion remarkably fair, but ruddy; and his face, although too round to be strictly handsome, had a pleasing and good-humoured expression; and, combined with his laughing light-blue eyes, formed a striking contrast to those Werter-visages with which romantic young ladies are wont to fall in love, as prompt paymasters draw their bills, at sight. He was attired in a blue frock-coat and foraging-cap, and had altogether the look and air of a gentleman.

When I first descried him, he was, with a flint in his hand, endeavouring to coax a reluctant spark from the tyer of one of the wheels, into a piece of German tinder, for the purpose, I presumed, of lighting his cigar. On my addressing him, he desisted from his occupation. I had formerly, at the house of a merchant in London, been thrown into the society of some American gentlemen, and thought I could detect, in the first sentence of his reply to my expressions of condolence in his misfortune, that he was an American, which, it afterwards appeared, he really was.

In answer to my inquiry as to the cause of the accident, he pointed to one of the fore-wheels, which was lying a few yards in the rear of the carriage.

"But where," I inquired, "is your postilion?"

"He has proceeded on the other horse to an inn which,

he informs me, is a few miles further, in quest of assistance," was the answer.

"Do you expect him back soon?" I asked.

"His return," replied he, "depends, I imagine, upon the quality of the landlord's wine, and the charms of his daughter, if he have any; for the knave, I find, was born on the frontier, and with the true Teutonic taste for the wine-flask, has all a Frenchman's devotedness to the fair sex. The fellow has been gone long enough to have been back an hour since."

"I marvel," said I, "that you did not mount the other horse, and follow him."

"I made the experiment," was the reply, "but it did not answer."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed; "would not the beast let you get on his back?"

"O, yes!" said he; "but he had an objection to my remaining there; for, no sooner did I venture to suggest to him the propriety of quitting the greensward for the road, than the brute flung his heels up in the air, and threw me over his ears, with as little ceremony as if I had been a sack of sawdust!"

"But what do you propose to do?" I asked.

"Do?" he echoed; "what can I do, but pass the night in the forest, here, with the chance of being devoured!—whether by the wolves, or the wild boars, the morning will probably determine."

"Nay," said I, "there is surely an alternative."

"And what may that be?" he inquired.

"The vacant seat in my carriage:—you could not suppose," I continued, "that I, or any other man, could leave you in this plight."

"I know not," was the rejoinder, "what the *men* of your country are wont to do in such a case, but your women have marvellously little sympathy for a traveller in my condition. The only carriage that has passed the spot, since the accident, contained one of the sex, who, with a *chevaux-de-frise* of beard and moustache, which would have defied the most determined assault upon her lips, popped her head out of the window, and inquired

minutely into the particulars of my misfortune; but as she could not offer me a seat in her vehicle, without incommoding her maid or her marmozet, she left me, with many expressions of condolence, and the consolatory assurance that the wolves invariably devour the horse, before they attack the traveller."

As time was precious with us, I leaped from the carriage, and assisted the American in the transfer of his luggage from his vehicle to my own; when, with a few, but earnest acknowledgments, he took a seat beside me, and we pursued our journey. His name, I perceived by the brass plate on his portmanteau, was Woodley.

My fellow-traveller was frank and communicative, and, by the time we arrived at the inn, I gathered from his conversation, that he had been brought up to the profession of physic, which, however, finding himself, at the age of one-and-twenty, the inheritor of an ample fortune, he had abandoned, and was, at that time, in the course of a tour through Europe.

The inn at which we were destined to sojourn, was an old and dilapidated building, which, although of considerable size, contained but two rooms, independently of sleeping apartments, into which a guest could be introduced; namely, the kitchen, and a parlour on the opposite side of the entrance-hall. The parlour being already occupied by an English gentleman and lady, we were asked into the kitchen, where the first object which encountered the gaze of my new acquaintance, was his Gallo-teutonic postilion, with a glass in one hand, and the rosy fingers of the "maid of the inn" in the other.

The manifestation of the American's justly excited cholera would, in all probability, not have been restricted to words, had not the offender vanished, with his inamorata, leaving to us their places by the side of the blazing fire, which, with such homely, yet substantial, and, to us, acceptable refreshment, as the house afforded, had soon the effect of restoring my companion's wonted good humour.

Our repast was seasoned by a flask of Rhenish, which our host pronounced to be of the vintage of 1789. Whatever might have been its age, the wine was passable,

and, under its influence, the American and myself, being left alone in the apartment, grew mutually communicative, and discussed "things in general," with as little reserve as if we had been friends of some years' standing. Among other topics, the respective merits of a monarchical and republican form of government became the subject of conversation; each of us, of course, advocating the system under which he lived, and, it may be added, had prospered. Insensibly the debate assumed that warmth which is, unfortunately, too characteristic of political discussions, and it not unfrequently required an effort, on both sides, to restrain the discussion within the boundary of good breeding and courtesy.

In the mean time, we had called for another bottle, from which we each filled a glass, when, in reply to what I deemed a reflection on my country, I hazarded a remark which was probably more creditable to my patriotism than my judgment. My glass, at the moment, was applied to my lips, and the American's was within an inch of his, when he hastily replaced it on the table, and dashed mine upon the floor.

"What mean you, sir?" inquired I, starting up, under the influence of mingled feelings of wrath and surprise.

"Simply," replied he, in a tone of calmness approaching to seriousness, and contrasting greatly with his former animated strain, "that there is that in the wine which belongs not to the vintage of 1789, so much lauded by our host. In other words, it is drugged, and that so potently, that one glass of the liquor before you would despatch us upon a journey which we have little contemplated, and for which,—God help us,—we are, perhaps, as little prepared."

"My dear sir," I exclaimed, "forgive the rash expressions which escaped my lips!"

"Nay," said he, "the occasion appeared to warrant them; but it was no time for ceremony."

"But," returned I, "are you well-advised of what you assert?"

"Sure of it," he replied; "I cannot be mistaken as to the poison: I know it too well, and could detect a drop of it in a hog'shead."

"But what," I asked, "can be the object of thus drugging the wine?"

"Plunder," was the answer; "and the means, murder. These German road-side inns have an indifferent reputation. I like not the looks of that same landlord of ours, and I have more than doubts of the good faith of my postilion; I begin to suspect that the breaking down of the carriage was less the result of accident, than of design, on his part to leave me at the mercy, not of the wolves and wild boars, but of a gang of robbers, with whom gentry of my driver's complexion have not unfrequently been found in league. However, we will summon him to our presence, on some pretext connected with my journey to-morrow, and, by a little dexterous cross-questioning, may elicit something to confirm or remove our suspicions. In the meantime, whatever be our apprehensions, it will not be wise to betray them; so, I pray you, gather up the fragments of your glass, and cast them into the ashes:—you may replace it from the side-board, yonder, while I summon my varlet."

Our call, however, for the postilion of the broken vehicle, was fruitless. He had, we were informed by the damsel already alluded to, quitted the inn, in quest, it was alleged, of the post-horse, which Woodley had left grazing by the carriage. Our worst fears were now confirmed, inasmuch as there could be little doubt that the knave had absconded, for the purpose of putting his accomplices on the right scent for the quarry which they would have missed in the forest.

We remained, for a few seconds, gazing at each other in perplexed silence, which I was the first to break, by exclaiming, "Our position is any thing but an agreeable one; what is to be done?"

"Nothing," was my companion's reply, "but stand by each other; for, if I mistake not, we shall have fearful odds against us."

"Shall I send for my servant?" I inquired; meaning the functionary whom my friend had left with the carriage, and who officiated for me in the treble capacity of valet, postilion, and interpreter.

"By no manner of means," was the rejoinder of

Woodley, who exhibited a forethought and presence of mind rarely witnessed on such trying occasions. "Much," he added, "as we are in need of his presence to reduce the odds, which, I fear, are opposed to us, we cannot, after your strict injunctions that he should not be disturbed until the morning, send for him, without awakening suspicions which may precipitate the catastrophe we seek to avert."

The fact is, that the poor fellow, naturally of a drowsy habit, had been so overcome by the fatigue of his journey and the subsequent attention to his cattle, that I had dismissed him to his chamber, which was in a remote part of the rambling old building, as soon as he had despatched his meal.

"Nevertheless," resumed Woodley, "we may as well open a communication with the English gentleman in the opposite apartment; for, although to judge of the glimpse I caught of him when the door opened just now, he will help us little if it come to hard knocks, it is but fair to apprise him of the danger to which, I doubt not, he is exposed in common with ourselves."

I assumed the office of ambassador, and, on being admitted to the room, I found myself in the presence of a portly gentleman, upon whose head some threescore winters had cast their snows, and whose full and rather rubicund countenance gave evidence of "a contented mind," and somewhat of the "continual feast," which forms the other section of the proverb. In fact, "John Bull" was written upon his face in a good round hand, which was not to be mistaken.

At the opposite end of the little table on which the dinner was spread, was a young lady, apparently about nineteen, in whose features a "general resemblance," as it is called, to her companion, was softened down into an expression of surpassing loveliness, and left no doubt that the twain before me were father and daughter.

I believe that there are few persons who care to be interrupted at their dinner, unless it be by an old friend, to give them an excuse for drinking an extra glass afterwards; and thus it was, that, although of an easy tem-

per, the venerable gentleman's philosophy was scarcely proof against my intrusion at that particular juncture.

However, Alderman C * * *, the worshipful and *enlightened* magistrate of the ward of *Candlewick*,—for such was the august individual in whose presence I stood,—received me with an encouraging nod, and obligingly pointed to a chair at his right hand.

The reader will readily believe that I wasted few words in the way of preface, but, plunging at once “in medias res,” informed him of our discovery in the matter of the wine.

“Obliged to you all the same, sir,” said the worthy senior; “but I never touch a drop of their wishy-washy wines, and my daughter never drinks wine at all. This is my tippie,” he continued, lifting a glass of brandy and water to his lips, and adding, “Your health, sir.”

A small travelling spirit-case, which stood open on the table, showed that he did not trust to the cellar of a German inn, even for a supply of his favourite beverage; but, for the “good of the house,” as he expressed himself, he had ordered a bottle of wine, which, although the cork had been drawn, remained untouched on the table.

When, however, I communicated to him my suspicions that the adulteration of our Hochheimer was the result, not of accident, but of a design upon our lives and purses, the alderman dropped his knife and fork, and, in a tone rather of vexation than alarm, exclaimed, “Well, this comes of foreign travel! Catch me beyond the limits of old England again, and they may plunder me and cut my throat into the bargain! I should have been forty miles further on my road by this time,” he continued, “but for the unlucky chance of my driver falling sick, and I much doubt if he will be well enough to proceed with us to-morrow morning; but that will not be of much consequence, if we are to be assassinated to-night. However,” he added, “they shall not have it all their own way.”

With the love of good living, and bluntness of John Bull, the alderman possessed no small portion of John Bull's courage; and starting up, he hurried across the room to his portmanteau, and drawing thence a pair of

holster pistols, which he assured me were "Tower proof," and had formed part of his equipment when a private in that distinguished corps, the City Light Horse, he said, "My limbs, young gentleman,—thanks to old age and the gout,—are not quite so nimble as yours, but I can yet pull a trigger, and if there is virtue in gunpowder, the rogues, if they will have our gold, shall have an ounce of lead with it."

After a brief consultation, it was agreed that I and my transatlantic companion should shift our quarters from the kitchen, to the apartment occupied by the citizen and his daughter, in order that we might concentrate our forces. On returning to Mr. Woodley, to communicate the result of my embassy, I found that, in order that our suspicions of treachery might not be betrayed, he had emptied the bottle upon the ashes, so as to make it appear that we had drunk the wine.

Previously to our joining the alderman, we took our pistols from our portmanteaus, and, having bestowed them in our pockets, summoned the attendant, and ordered a fresh bottle and glasses into the next room; alleging my countryman's invitation as the cause of our removal.

We had scarcely effected this coalition with the alderman, and closed the door of the apartment, when we heard the tramp of many feet advancing from the stables through the court-yard of the inn, and, shortly afterwards, in the passage which divided us from the kitchen we had just quitted. Having waited until the noise thus occasioned had subsided, I applied my eye to the key-hole, and saw, through the open doorway on the opposite side of the passage, a group of rough looking men gathered round the kitchen fire, apparently in earnest conversation, while among them, not a little to my uneasiness, tending as it did to strengthen my fears, I could plainly distinguish the postilion of the American's carriage.

Unwilling to augment the alarm of our fair companion, by communicating the result of my examination, I turned a significant glance on Woodley, who, without making any remark, rose and reconnoitred the enemy as I had done, and then resumed his seat. The alderman and his daughter, however, had observed our movements, and, I

suppose, gleaned, from the expressions of our faces, that the aspect of affairs was not improving. A few minutes of entire silence succeeded, and anxious as I naturally enough felt on my own account, I could not help stealing a glance at the countenances of my companions, in order to ascertain the effect produced upon them by the more than doubtful circumstances in which we were placed.

The alderman betrayed no emotion, except by the restlessness of his eye, which wandered from the door to his daughter, and showed that the father was busy at his heart; while the compressed lips and varying colour of the lovely girl, at once indicated her apprehensions, and her endeavours to conceal them from her anxious parent.

I next scrutinized the American; but his look blenched not; nay, even the perilous position in which he stood, could not quite quell the vivacious expression of his laughing blue eye. His face was a study for an artist; calm, not from contempt of danger, but from the habitual fortitude and self-possession which mark a brave man, who, having made up his mind to the worst, is resolved to sell his life as dearly as he can.

In the mean time, the conversation in the kitchen, though audible, was carried on in so low a tone, that it was impossible for us to gather its import, without throwing open the door of our apartment, which it did not seem expedient to do. Few words passed among ourselves, for although Woodley and I essayed, by starting indifferent subjects of conversation, to turn the thoughts of our companions from the unpleasant channel into which our precarious circumstances had forced them, our endeavours were utterly abortive.

The American, observing the alderman and his daughter conversing in a low whisper, availed himself of the opportunity to examine the locks of his pistols, unperceived by them; an example which, of course, I did not fail to follow. An inspection of the citizen's weapons, was not, however, so easily to be accomplished without increasing the alarm of his daughter; but Woodley, whose tact was equal to his self-possession, after making a few turns across the room, took up the pistols of the veteran light-horseman, with a careless air, as if for the purpose

of examining their fashion. Turning his back upon their owner and his fair girl, he threw open the pans, and, with a smile, exhibited them to me without a grain of priming, it having entirely escaped. Having dexterously remedied the defect, unperceived by our companions, he quietly replaced them by the alderman's side.

He had scarcely performed this manœuvre, when a loud crash of thunder, the distant muttering of which had, during the previous half-hour, announced a storm, burst over the roof of the inn, with a vibration which shook every article of furniture in the apartment we occupied, and produced a corresponding effect upon the nerves of the young lady. Peal succeeded peal, and the rain began to descend in torrents, and with a violence as if every drop were a bullet.

We needed not this addition to the horrors of the evening to increase our discomforts. At last a terrific clap of thunder was followed by a crash which indicated that one of the monarchs of the forest had fallen a victim to the electric fluid. This appeared to be the climax of the storm, which gradually decreased; the thunder became less audible, and, at length, died away; the rain ceased, and Silence, "Darkness' solemn sister," resumed her reign.

We were not left long without a new subject for our speculation. The sound of a horse at full speed was heard upon the road, and, in a few seconds, the clattering of hoofs upon the paved court-yard, announced a fresh arrival. The front door of the inn was then opened, and steps, as of a heavily booted horseman in the passage, were audible. The new comer passed into the kitchen, and we shortly afterwards heard a voice, differing from any which had previously emanated from that quarter, addressing, in a tone of authority, the party which had previously taken possession of that apartment.

It should be remarked that, although both the American and myself possessed a sufficient knowledge of German to enable us to read works in that language, our very imperfect acquaintance with the pronunciation rendered it extremely difficult for us to understand the natives, as well as to make ourselves intelligible to them. The in-

convenience, as far as I was concerned, had, latterly, been mainly obviated by the kindness of my friend, who had left me an interpreter in his servant. Our fair companion was even less familiar with the language than ourselves; and, to use the worthy alderman's own words, it was all Greek to him.

The conclave in the kitchen appeared to have waited only for the arrival of the horseman to proceed to action, and we were not long left in doubt, as to whether the discussion had reference to ourselves, for the footsteps of the whole body—as we conceived—were heard advancing towards our apartment; at the door of which they halted, when the voice of the lately arrived guest, in a hurried and impatient tone, demanded admittance.

In anticipation of an assault, we had taken the precaution to fasten the door, as well as we could, with the single bolt on the inside; and had also disposed all the moveable furniture of the room so as to form a breast-work, behind which we could, at greater advantage, fire upon our opponents, in the very probable event of their forcing the door.

To the summons we returned a peremptory refusal, and inquired what they meant by disturbing us. An animated conversation, or rather consultation, then took place among our assailants, during which the American, addressing the alderman and myself, said:

"My friends, if they burst the door, as no doubt they will, be not in too great haste to fire. We must not, if it be possible to avoid it, waste a shot. Let us, therefore, be cool, and let each mark his man; and, with our three brace of pistols, we may make six of our enemies bite the dust before they can close with us."

The words had scarcely passed his lips, when the demand for admittance was reiterated with more energy, and was, of course, met by a repeated refusal.

From the rejoinder of the spokesman without, all that we could understand was, "You are trifling with your lives! Open the door, or you are all dead men!"

"You will enter at your peril!" responded the American.

"Fools! madmen!" we collected from the reply, "you

know not what you do. Here, Wilhelm,—Rudolph,—Schwartz !”—and, the next moment, we discovered that preparations were making for forcing the door.

A few heavy blows were struck upon the panels, which, however, not being of modern manufacture, resisted the assault. A lever was next resorted to, apparently with a view of breaking the bolt, or forcing it from the socket; but the iron and the door-post were obstinate, and our assailants were again foiled.

During these operations, I stole a glance at my companions. The maiden, whom, for better protection, we had placed behind the most substantial piece of furniture in the room, had sunk upon her knees, with her hands clasped, and her eyes upraised in prayer to Him whom she had early been taught to believe was “a very present help in time of trouble.”

The alderman, though much agitated, exhibited no lack of courage; but it was the courage of a tigress roused in defence of her young.

The American was wonderfully cool and self-possessed. Having accidentally dropped one of his pistols, he re-examined the lock, and replaced the percussion-cap with as much apparent indifference as he would have wound up his watch. His anxiety for the safety of the young lady was second in intensity only to her father's. Woodley's glance was ever reverting to her, and, observing that she was not sufficiently covered by the piece of furniture behind which she had taken refuge, he took up such a position, that a shot, fired in that direction, must have taken effect upon himself before it could reach the object of his solicitude. His generous consideration was not lost upon either the father or the daughter. I could perceive that they thanked him with their eyes.

For my own part, whether I betrayed any particular emotion on the occasion, I cannot say; but this I know, that I heartily wished myself out of the scrape.

The crow-bar,—for such was the implement of which our besiegers, in the last attempt, availed themselves,—was then inserted between the door and the door-post, where they were united by the hinges, which, being rusted and crazy, finally gave way. The door fell inwards

with a loud crash, and discovered a group of rough-looking persons, headed by our landlord, and a tall swarthy man, booted to the thighs, whom the tone of his voice identified with the horseman that had last arrived at the inn.

Each of them was formidably armed; the booted hero presenting at us a phial—apparently of physic; while the landlord supported him with a jug of hot water!!!

Not being exactly prepared to combat with enemies armed after such a fashion, Woodley and myself, each having a cocked pistol in our hands, reserved our fire. The military ardour of the alderman was not, however, so easily repressed; for, no sooner was the door forced, than he discharged his pistol at the round, target-like visage of the landlord, and, I regret to say, with fatal effect upon one of his followers,—an unlucky cur who had attended his master to the assault.

Boniface, regardless of the fate of his faithful dog, fell instantly upon his knees before us, spilling, in the action, half a pint of scalding water over the shins of the man of physic, who, thereupon, executed a caper worthy of Oscar Byrne.

All that we could gather from the nearly unintelligible jargon which he poured forth, were supplications for mercy and forgiveness. Luckily, at this juncture, we were joined by my interpreter, who had been roused by the uproar and report of the pistol, and had hurried, half-dressed, to the scene of action.

Then followed an explanation, by which the mysterious events of the evening were cleared up to the satisfaction of all parties. The landlord, it appeared, not being particularly rich in the article of bottles, was in the habit of drawing from the cask such wine as was called for by his guests; and, in the case of our second supply of the "Vintage of 1789," had used a bottle which had contained a mixture for poisoning vermin, and had not been quite cleansed from its deleterious contents. On discovering the fatal error which he had committed, he sent off instantly for the nearest *Æsculapius*; fearing, however, in the mean time, to acquaint his guests with a disaster for which he had no remedy at hand.

The postilion of Woodley's carriage had, as he alleged,

gone into the forest, in search of his horse by moonlight; but, on his way, met some peasants, who had found the animal, and were conducting it to the inn; and whom, in acknowledgment of their good offices in the recovery of his steed, he had treated to some liquor in the kitchen, where they were subsequently detained by the violence of the storm. The clatter of hoofs, which had added to our alarm, proceeded from the horse of the man of medicine, who came, in all haste, to apply an antidote to the poison which we were supposed to have imbibed.

The landlord, who had laid his account with little short of being hanged for poisoning his guests, was overjoyed on hearing that we had so providentially discovered the presence of the poison in the wine, before tasting it; nor had the doctor reason to regret his being called out, at that unseasonable hour, inasmuch as he received from each of us an acknowledgment of his zeal in hastening to offer that aid of which we were happily not in need.

Ridiculous as was the termination of the affair, we were none of us in a tone of mind to laugh at it. Two of our party had escaped a horrible and untimely death; while the alderman had, by the interposition of the same Providence, been saved from shedding the blood of an innocent man. Every other feeling was merged in thankfulness for our deliverance, and, with mutual congratulations, we separated for our respective chambers.

A night of tempest was succeeded by a glorious morning. The sun shone brightly upon the leaves of the forest, yet dripping with the recent rain. The birds were singing merrily, and they were not alone in their gladness; for, when we assembled in the little room which had been the scene of so much alarm, there could scarcely have been found four more cheerful countenances than those exhibited by the alderman, his daughter, the American, and myself.

On my repeating my acknowledgments to Mr. Woodley, for his prompt interference in saving me from the deadly potion, he replied, "Nay—we are quits: if I prevented your swallowing poison, I am equally indebted to you for saving me from the wolves and the wild boars,

and from exposure to a tempest scarcely less to have been dreaded than either."

"And for my part," said the alderman, "if I escape poison, assassination, and drowning, and return to Old England, I shall be glad to thank you, young gentlemen, in Finsbury Square, for your gallant behaviour."

"Nay," rejoined the American, "you are pleased to take our valour upon trust; and yet the affair was not altogether a bloodless one."

"Witness the unlucky cur," returned the other; "however, it is well that it was no worse."

It appearing from an examination of the crazy vehicle which had broken down with Mr. Woodley, that the necessary repairs would occupy some time, he discharged it, and, as my route was different from that of the alderman and the American, the old gentleman offered him a seat in his carriage, which was, of course, thankfully accepted. We parted with many expressions of regard, and of our desire to meet again, and I pursued my way to Stuttgart.

If the interest taken by my readers in the young republican, be equal to what he excited in me, they will perhaps expect some further account of him. His fate, I regret to say, was a melancholy one, for he had not proceeded many stages with his new acquaintances, when he was shot through the heart by a brace of balls—eyeballs, I should have said—from under the silken lashes of the alderman's fair daughter.

It was nearly a year after this adventure, and some months after my return from my continental tour, that I found on my table the card of Mr. Woodley, who had called during my temporary absence on a visit to a friend a short distance from town. On returning his call, I found him established in an excellent house in one of the squares. After some conversation on our respective adventures since we parted, he suddenly interrupted me by exclaiming, "By the way, I must introduce you to a mutual friend, who happens to be with me at this time." He quitted the room and, in a few minutes, returned with our fair companion of the Schwartzwald, whom he introduced to me as Mrs. Woodley.

He was justly proud of his wife, as well as of his worthy alderman of his son-in-law.

For myself, the bitterness of the disappointment which had driven me to seek "consolation in drink" was considerably mitigated by the fact that the gentle Julia who jilted me—she who was wont to be all smiles and sweetness—had turned out a Tartar—in other words, a domestic legislator—a very *Draco*. She finally drove her husband to that splendid refuge for the henpecked, a seat in the House of Commons, which gave him an excuse for dining at Bellamy's, and staying out till twelve o'clock, five nights in the week during session. He dared not have the toothache, without asking his wife's permission.

I have little to add. My friend Woodley had taken a cottage at Box Hill, and asked me to spend a month with them. The town was empty, and the club heavier than Magog's; so I gladly accepted the invitation.

Mrs. Woodley had a cousin, pretty, accomplished, good-humoured, and who did not waltz. Fanny and I walked together, talked together, and sang together; but still I should have escaped the fatal *noose*—a word which is applied literally to hanging, and figuratively to marrying;—both go by destiny. Many a man has been driven to hang himself by a dull day—I was driven to matrimony by the same cause. Fanny and I were shut up in the library for three hours—it rained cats and dogs—the day was dull, and our conversation grew duller;—we had exhausted every topic, and for the pure dearth of a new subject, I proposed matrimony, and was accepted. We were, as the world says, made for each other; she was just emancipated from the thraldom of the gravest of guardians, the Lord Chancellor, and I was yet on the sunny side of thirty. Let the *Times* tell the rest: "A set of chambers in the Albany to be let," and—"Married, at St. George's, Hanover Square," &c. One word more: I have been married three whole weeks, and, not having repented my bargain, may justly be termed a happy man.

ANNIE DEER.

A TALE OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES.

BY G. P. R. JAMES, ESQ.,

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THERE is a little town on the coast of England which at the present day is not exactly a sea-port, though, in former times, when the chivalrous race of Plantagenet held sway within these realms, it was not only reckoned as such, but sent its ships to the fleet under the command of a Mohun, a Grey, a de Lisle, or a Clinton. There is as little connexion, however, between the former state of the town and the present, as there is between those days and the time at which the events which I am about to relate, took place. All that remains of its former splendour, indeed, is the ruin of an old castle, picturesquely perched on the extremity of a little slope, which, like the ambitious aspirations of youth that have no result, runs out, promontory-fashion, into the sea, towering up as it goes, till, cut short in its career, it ends in a chalky cliff of no very great height.

Upon the brow of that cliff is the castle we have mentioned, standing, like skull and cross-bones upon a nun's table, a memento of the transitory nature of all things, though the eyes once familiar with it seldom draw any moral from that memorial of the dead.

Along the slope of the hill, towards the west, is built the little modern town, or rather the village, a congregation of small white houses, looking over the ever-changing sea. Manifold are the gardens. Though Flora loves not to be fanned with the wings of Zephyr, when his pen-feathers are dipped in brine, yet we are obliged to

confess, that the flowers there grown are sweet and beautiful—the shrubs, though rather diminutive in size, green and luxuriant.

There are one or two pretty houses in the place, the best being the rectory, which stands near the church, and which, though large, is not very convenient. The neatest, the most commodious, is one which, situated just below the castle, takes in part of the ancient vallum as a portion of the garden, and is built in the purest style of cottage architecture, as if to contrast the more strongly in its trim and flourishing youngness with the old walls which, in the pride of decayed nobility, tower up above it, raising battlement and watch-tower, high in air, as if turning up the nose at the little upstart at their feet.

In this house dwelt a personage by no means uncommon in England, and combining in his own nature a great many of the faults and good qualities of our national character. But we must give a sketch of his history, which, though as brief as possible, will explain his character without any long details. The son of a well-doing man in the neighbouring county town, he had early been put apprentice to a large dealer in various commodities; gradually made his way in the world; entered into partnership with his old master; rendered the business doubly flourishing by care, activity, and exactness; increased in wealth and honour; married at forty-five the daughter of a poor clergyman—the only thing he ever did in his life without the cash-book in his hand; and was duly presented with one fair daughter, whom he loved passing well.

Through life he was the most exact of men, prompt, punctual, authoritative: and, having really considerable talents in a particular line, very good taste in many things, an easy and increasing fortune, and a very comfortable notion of his own value, he became one of the most important men of the town, gave law to the common council, and tone to a considerable class in society. He was a little dogmatic, somewhat pompous, and loved not contradiction; and his wife, who was as meek as a lamb, took care that he should experience none in his own dwelling. But, with all these little faults, he had con-

trived to make himself loved as well as respected. For though in putting two and two together, he was as accurate as our great mathematician's calculating machine, yet, in reality and in truth, there was not a more liberal man upon the face of the earth. If any body applied to him for pecuniary assistance, he would sit down, and, gathering together all the facts, calculate, with the most clear-headed precision, whether a loan would be really useful to the person who asked it. If that were made clear, he had no hesitation whatever; and, even if it were not made clear, and there was something like an even chance that his assistance might be serviceable, or might not, he only hesitated for a minute and a-half; and the good spirit unloosed the purse-strings, ere the bad spirit could get them into a run knot.

As, however, he was upon extremely good terms with a lady who is one of the pleasantest companions that we can have in life, and whose name is Dame Fortune, those instances in which the chances were equally balanced, generally turned out as he could have wished, and he both served his friend and regained his money, with the proper addition of interest, both in bank-notes and friendship.

He never met with but one great misfortune in his life up to the time of our commencing his history; but that misfortune drove him from the county town, and caused him to settle underneath the old castle by the sea-side. He lost neither his wife, nor his daughter, his health, his spirits, nor his fortune. No! it was an addition, not a loss, that cut him to the heart.

One of the members of the common council, it seems, had a brother, who was a silversmith in London, and who, having made a comfortable competence, wisely retired from trade, came down to the town of which he was a native and a free-man, and was soon admitted into the municipal body. Now, whether he had frequented a debating society or the reporter's gallery of St. Stephen's, whether he had studied under Cobbett or Hunt, Burdett or Hume, or any of those gentlemen—we do not mean either to be personal or political—any of those gentlemen, we say, famed for opposition, it would seem as if,

from the moment he came down, he had determined to overthrow the supremacy of our worthy friend, and to worry him as though he had been a bishop, a baited bull, or a prime-minister. Moreover, he was oratorical; he would speak you a speech by the hour, in which he would confound all that the straightforward good sense of our friend had made clear; he would pour upon the simplest point a torrent of fine words, not always pronounced with the utmost purity; he would render the most pellucid position opaque by the turbid stream of his eloquence, and would add a few words of Latin, with very little reverence for the terminations of the nouns, or the tenses of the verbs, but still with sufficient volubility to astound and overawe the ignorant ears around him.

Our friend was resolved not to die without a struggle; and, at the close of any of these triumphant orations, he would rise, feeling morally convinced—seeing—knowing—believing, that all his adversary had said was idle, absurd, and stupid, but yet labouring under a consciousness of his own incapability to disentangle the subject which had been twisted up into a Gordian knot, or even to find out the thin, feeble, and insignificant thread of his foe's argumentation amidst the crystals of sugarcandy with which his eloquence had invested it. He would rise, as we have said, and gasp, and struggle, and sit down again, impotent of reply.

There was no help for it; he felt himself worsted; and, after the agony of a couple of months, he retreated from a field which he no longer could maintain. He resigned his post in the town council, made the necessary arrangements with his partner in business to give up his active share, and retired, a man well to do, to spend the rest of his days in peace at the little coast town, about ten miles from his former dwelling, the localities of which we have already described. There, then, he settled with his wife and only daughter; there he embellished, improved, did good, and enjoyed his doings, and passed his time in that busy and important usefulness which was so well suited to his disposition.

But we forgot all this time to make the reader acquainted with his name. It was one, which, though not un-

common, was in some degree remarkable, being neither more nor less than John Deer. Now, he certainly was not so light-footed as a roe, nor so timid as a stag, nor possessed of any of the distinctive qualities of the cervine creation. He was much too consequential a person also for any one—not even excepting his own wife—to venture to play upon his name, and turn John Deer into Dear John: so that the name of Deer could come to no harm in his hands. But, alack, and well-a-day! he had, as we have before said, one fair daughter, whom he loved passing well; and she was beautiful as a rose, gentle as a dove, timid as a young fawn, and her name was Ann; so that it very naturally happened that when anybody spoke of her as Annie Deer, there was an expression about the lips, and a meaning in the eyes, which gave the last *e* in her name very much the effect of an *a*; and Annie Deer, from her father's and her mother's lips—and one other pair besides—was Annie dear, whenever she was mentioned.

Now, it was natural for her father to call her so, and very natural for her mother to call her so, and still more natural than all for one other person in the village so to call her also; but who that person was, remains to be shown. We will not keep the reader a moment in suspense. Suspense is wrong, unjust, wicked: persons who have been condemned by a competent jury, and judged by a competent judge, are the only ones to whom suspense should be applied—and very seldom, if ever, even then. The person who pronounced the name of Annie Deer with such a tone, shall be disclosed to the reader immediately.

There was a poor widow in the village, who had seen better days, but whose whole remaining fortune was a hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and more than one half of that was on annuity. Yet, out of this sum she had contrived both to live with great respectability, and to give to her son, whom she loved far better than herself, an education equal to the station in which his father had moved. When Mr. Deer and his family had first come to live at the little town of Saltham, as we shall call the place, William Stanhope was absent with his

ship, for he had by this time become a mate in an East Indiaman, and Mr. and Mrs. Deer did everything they could to be kind and civil to Mrs. Stanhope, and make her time pass cheerfully till her son's return.

When at length he did come back, they welcomed him as an old friend, pouring upon him all those civilities and festivities with which we greet the long absent and long expected. He was a very handsome young man, brave, gay, and happy in his disposition, gentlemanly and well educated, but withal touched with the frank, straightforwardness of a sailor; but the quality which, joined with others, pleased Mr. Deer the most, was a prudent and economical calculation of expenses, which taught him what was just to others, and what was just to himself. Mr. Deer liked him very much, and though Annie Deer was at that time only fourteen, and no great chance existed of her falling in love with anybody, yet Mr. Deer, being famed for foresight, resolved that he would examine young Stanhope's character thoroughly, and watch him well.

That year William Stanhope had brought home no great wealth, having scarcely any capital to trade upon; but he had brought some very pretty presents for his mother, which showed him to be a very kind and dutiful young man. The next year, having increased his capital, his gains were increased; and, besides bringing home more money, he brought home not only presents for his mother, but presents for Annie Deer, which he gave straightforwardly to her father, expressing his gratitude for all the kindness which had been shown to his mother during his absence.

Mr. Deer took the presents, and inquired, with looks of much personal interest, into the speculations of the young sailor, and their success. William Stanhope was frank and candid, and though the sum that he had made was not very brilliant, yet, compared with his means of making it, it promised so well that Mr. Deer began to calculate, and found that liberal assistance might, without risk, enable young Stanhope to advance his fortune rapidly, and he made the offer at once. It was embraced with

thanks, and the next voyage insured to William Stanhope competence as a single man.

He had a higher ambition, however. He was now competent to take the command of a ship. He was respected and esteemed by all who knew him, and a favourably offer was made to him, but the sum of ready money required was very large: and, though he mentioned the offer to his mother, with all its advantages, and all the difficulties that interposed, he spoke of it to no one else. His mother went that evening to drink tea with the family under the castle, but William Stanhope remained at home musing, alleging that he had letters of business to write; and the next morning, instead of taking his way to the house of Mr. Deer, as was his common practice, he wandered along solitary upon the sands round the bay, seeming to count every pebble that studded the shore. He had not gone very far, however, before a friendly hand was laid upon his arm, and Mr. Deer, joining him in his walk, entered at once upon business. He told him that Mrs. Stanhope had related to them the evening before, the offer which had been made concerning the command of a ship, and then went on to ask his young friend why he had not applied to him, John Deer, for the money.

"I did not know, my dear sir," replied the youth, "that you would be willing to lend so large a sum."

"Not willing to every body," replied Mr. Deer, "but quite willing to you, who, in all your transactions, are as correct as my cash-book."

Still, William Stanhope paused; and then, after letting two sailors, who were loitering along the shore, pass them by, he turned directly towards his companion, and, raising his head, he said, "There is another reason, Mr. Deer, why I have not asked you; I am in love with your daughter, Annie, and, if I get on in the world, I am determined to seek her hand. I did not wish to mention this at present, because I have but little to offer her, except in hopes and expectations, and I could not think of asking you to lend me so large a sum of money, without telling you what were my feelings towards your daughter."

"Sir, you are an honest man," replied Mr. Deer, "and keep, I see, both sides of the account clear. But I will strike a balance with you, and begin a new account. Thus, then, we stand, William: I will lend you ten thousand pounds to buy your ship, and, when you think you have made enough to afford a wife, I will give you the ten thousand pounds as my daughter's fortune, and be glad to receive you as my son-in-law."

"This is beginning a new account, indeed, my dear sir, for it leaves me your debtor in every way."

"Pay it off in kindness to my child," replied Mr. Deer; and the matter was thus finally settled with the father. As to the daughter, William Stanhope sat with her for an hour and a half before dinner; and at a little party which was given that night at the clergyman's house, every body declared that the beautiful eyes of Annie Deer looked like two stars.

The two months that followed were filled up with that thrilling joy in which present pleasure is mingled with, and heightened by the expectation of something not exactly sorrowful, nor painful, nor melancholy, but perhaps we should call it sad. Thus, Annie Deer enjoyed, to the full, the society of him she loved, though the expectation of his departure, upon his first voyage, as captain of a China vessel, sometimes brought a cloud over the bright sky of their happiness. Time, that rapid old postilion, who goes jogging on in the saddle faster and faster every day, without at all minding the six thousand years that have elapsed since first he began to beat the road—Time, we say, whipped his horses into the full gallop, and carried William Stanhope and Annie Deer with wonderful rapidity to the point of parting. Annie Deer cried very bitterly; and, as they were among the first tears she had ever shed in her life, they were, of course, the more painful. William Stanhope would not suffer himself to weep, but he felt little less than she did. They parted, however. He took the command of his vessel; and, shortly afterwards, she, within one hour, saw in the newspaper, and read in his own handwriting, that the Honourable Company's ship, Lord Spencer, Captain Stanhope, commander, had cleared out, and dropped down the river.

It was the month of March, and the weather somewhat boisterous; and Mr. Deer, when he heard the wind whistle and roar down the chimney, thanked God that some man had been struck with the very provident idea of insuring vessels risking themselves upon that treacherous ocean. Annie Deer's mind ran in the same way, but it went no farther than wishing that there was really some meaning in the name by which Life Assurance Societies designate themselves. But she felt too bitterly, poor girl, that there is no insuring that fragile thing, human life, especially when trusted to the mercy of the winds and waves. Her daily walk was upon the edge of the little promontory, looking over the vast, melancholy sea; and, at length, a few days after the ship had dropped down the river, she beheld a gallant vessel coming on with a furious and not very favourable gale; and, watching it with deep interest, saw it take refuge in their little bay, and come to anchor to let pass the storm. About four in the afternoon, the wind lulled, but shifted more to the south-west, so that no ship was likely to get out of the Channel. About half-past four, as she was looking out of the drawing-room windows of her father's house, she saw something like a boat tossed up from time to time by the bounding waves, which the tempest had left behind it. In half an hour after, she was pressed in the arms of William Stanhope, and two or three hours more of pure happiness were added to the few which they had known through life. At ten o'clock, he took his departure; but, at that hour, the moon, though she was shining, was red and dim, announcing that the presence of the commander might soon be wanted on board his vessel.

Annie Deer retired to her chamber immediately afterwards. She retired not to repose, however, but, on the contrary, to pay for the happiness which she had that night experienced, by many a tear. She prayed, too, and prayed fervently, not without hope in the efficacy of prayer, but with that trembling timidity, that doubt of our own worthiness, under the weight of which the footsteps of the Apostle, though miraculously upheld, sunk through the surface of the yielding waters. All remained calm; and, towards eleven o'clock, she remarked the clouds

passing over the moon, taking a different direction from that which they had done in the morning: and she thought, with mixed hope and apprehension, that, ere the morning, perhaps, he whom she loved, might be far away upon that voyage, which was destined either to give them comfort and independence, or to separate them for ever. She lay down to rest; but, towards twelve o'clock, the wind began to rise, increased in violence every moment, and swelled, at length, into a hurricane. The casements rattled; the wainscot shook and creaked; the house itself seemed shaken. Loudly roaring round and round, the spirit of the storm appeared clamouring at the gates for admittance. It could be heard as it whistled through the branches of the trees. It could be distinguished as it rushed and raved amidst the ruins of the castle up above. It could be felt as it swept, with sighing and a melancholy sound, over the level sands of the bay, interrupted only by the sullen plunge of the waves, as they poured headlong upon the resounding shore. Annie Deer rose from her bed, and listened, and wept, and prayed, through the livelong night.

But what boots it to tell a long and a sad story, when a very few words will serve our purpose? With the morning light Annie Deer gazed from her window, but the ship was gone, and the storm continued; and, as she looked, without making any particular effort to hear, the sound of a few distant guns caught her ear, and made her heart sink low. The tempest lasted the whole day. During the night it decreased, and the next morning there were found on various points of the coast the spars and timbers of a gallant vessel, on some of which were painted "The Earl Spencer!" The gentlemen of Lloyd's announced the loss of an outward-bound Chinaman. The owners of the Earl Spencer cursed the luck which had lost them a good voyage, and applied to the underwriters. The underwriters cursed their luck still more furiously, but paid the money. Mr. Deer thanked God that he had insured to the full amount of his loan, and Annie Deer sat down with widowed heart, to pass the rest of her life with very little interest in the things thereof. Her mother marked the varying colour of her cheek, the lan-

guor of her look, and the frequent tearfulness of her eye; and, kissing her tenderly, let fall a drop on the pale forehead of her only child. Annie Deer met with sympathy from one kindred being in her melancholy path, and it was all she hoped for, all she asked, in life.

Such was the first part of the story of Annie Deer. Now, all stories, into whatsoever imaginary divisions they may be separated by the brains of the teller, have at least two parts; there is no getting rid of the beginning and the end. Having told the former, we must now turn to the latter, which is destined to be shorter still. Mr. Deer went to London, and was indemnified by the underwriters for the money he had advanced; and he returned to his dwelling, looking really sad for the loss of poor William Stanhope. He called upon the childless widow, and tried to comfort her, but she was not to be comforted. He spoke some soothing words to Annie, but Annie only wept the more; and Mr. Deer himself had a kind of perception that they had all suffered a loss, which money could never repair. As the house was dull, and the village was dull, and every thing about the place looked more or less gloomy, since the loss of the Lord Spencer and poor William Stanhope, Mr. Deer betook himself one day, merely for the sake of relaxation, to the county town, purposing, as the pleasantest and most habitual way of amusing his thoughts, to look into all the accounts and proceedings of the very respectable firm in which the greater part of his fortune was still embarked. His partner was out, however, when he arrived; and Mr. Deer, strolling out into the town, was met by Mr. Pocock the silversmith, and Mr. Pocock's retired brother John, the common-councilman and orator.

Now, Mr. Deer and Mr. John Pocock were severally sixty-three years of age and upwards, and the enmities of sixty-three are pertinacious things. Mr. Deer, therefore, would willingly have avoided Mr. John Pocock; but that gentleman, on the contrary, put his arm through his, talked to him very civilly, and, leading the conversation to the affairs of Mr. Deer's house, gave him a hint, with perfect kindness of intent and manner, that his partner might be getting on too fast. Mr. Deer was agitated,

alarmed, and irritated ; and, if he had done what his heart bade him, he would have told his companion to mind his own business, and to meddle with nobody else's affairs, for that he, John Deer, was rich enough to buy out him, John Pocock, and all his relations. He refrained, however, and answered as civilly as the nature of the case would allow ; but returned to his partner's house, and instantly set to work to investigate the matter thoroughly.

Sad and alarming was the result of his inquiries. He found that, during the five or six years of his absence, his partner, although he had contrived to make a fair show in their half-yearly accounts, had in fact addicted himself to banking, farming, and such vices. Immense sums were risked at that moment in hazardous speculations, and Mr. Deer saw himself inextricably implicated in transactions which he would not have meddled with for the world, of his own free will.

The matter went on as simply as it is possible to conceive. His partner, seeing that Mr. Deer was now convinced that he had trusted once too far, grew angry, resisted the interference which might have saved him, hurried recklessly on in the wrong course, and, ere four months were out, the house of Deer and Co. were bankrupts to the amount of more than a hundred thousand pounds. By the wise and strenuous efforts which Mr. Deer had made during those unhappy four months, to retrieve the affairs of the firm, they were enabled to pay very nearly twenty shillings in the pound. But the beautiful house under the castle was advertised for sale ; the rich furniture and plate were disposed of by auction ; and Mr. Deer retired to a small cottage next to that of the widow Stanhope.

Amidst all this distress, no one was so kind as Mr. John Pocock. Though at his period of life much locomotion was not agreeable, he drove over two or three times a week, to console, advise, and expostulate with Mr. Deer, whose mind had fallen into a painful state of despair, and who in body had sunk at once into an old man. He wished Mr. Deer to rouse his spirits, and to resume business at once upon his own account, and he offered most liberally to advance him any sum of money

for that purpose; but Mr. Deer felt, and Mr. John Pocock was soon convinced, that such a course was impracticable. The bankrupt's health gave way more and more each day. He became fretful and impatient. A very small pittance, which belonged to his wife, supported him and his family in penury for some months, but he saw it drawing to a close with agony of heart. Pity pained him—consolation seemed an insult; and he would gaze upon his daughter by the hour together, as she sat painting little screens, working little purses, or busying herself in any of those employments which she fancied and hoped might prove the means of supporting her father and mother in their old age. At length the money came to an end, and on that very night Mr. Deer was struck with palsy, which fixed him to the marble seat of impotent age all the rest of his days.

Annie Deer then found how little could be procured by those means to which she had trusted for support. Mrs. Deer bore all patiently, and she and her daughter consulted and deliberated long with Mr. John Pocock, as to what they could do in the terrible strait to which they were reduced. His kindness was unfailing. He looked at the afflicted wife—he looked at the beautiful, but destitute girl, till the tears rose in his eyes; and, insisting upon their taking a small sum as a loan, till he could devise some plan for their future life, he left them, promising to return on the following day, and declaring that he would not come back without some feasible scheme for their support. It was night on the promised day before he made his appearance, but then he came in his own chariot, and then there was a briskness in his look, and a smartness in his whole aspect, which led Mrs. Deer and her daughter to believe that his meditations on their behalf had not been without result. His hair was nicely powdered and adjusted to a line; his pigtail was tied up with a new piece of ribbon, and his best blue coat and white waistcoat shone without a speck. Mr. Deer was somewhat better, and sitting in a chair by the fire. Poor Mrs. Stanhope had come in to cheer them, as far as her sad heart would allow, and the sight of Mr. John Pocock, with a gayer air, blew up the last spark of hope that lin-

gered in their hearts. Mr. Pocock looked at Mrs. Stanhope, as if he could have wished her away; but he was full of what he had to say, and would not delay it.

"My dear Mr. Deer," he said, advancing into their little circle, "and you, Mrs. Deer, and *you*, my dear young lady, must give me your attention more than all. Misfortunes may happen to every one, and very sharp misfortunes have happened to you. Now, I see but one way on earth of remedying them, and making us all again happy and comfortable. I am an old man, Miss Annie, sixty-four years of age in April, which is next month; but, if you will accept the hand of an honest man, who loves you dearly, and respects you much, he will do all he can to make you and yours happy. His fortune is of his own making, and he may well do with it what he likes; he will be not only proud to have you for his wife, but proud to have a wife who will devote herself to make her *parents* as well as her *husband* comfortable."

Annie Deer had turned as pale as death; Mrs. Deer threw her arms around her child's neck, and wept bitterly; her father said not a word, but, like the parent in the most beautiful song we possess, he looked in her face till her heart was like to break. Her eyes did not overflow, but they turned towards Mrs. Stanhope, and her lips muttered, "Oh, William, William!—Sir," she continued, turning to Mr. Pocock, "I have loved, deeply loved another, and I love his memory still, and ever must love it."

"I will not be jealous of that, my dear young lady," he replied; "your love for the dead will never interfere with your duty towards the living. Nor do I expect you to love me otherwise than as a young woman may love an old man who is kind to her. Believe me, Miss Annie," he continued, taking her hand, "I am not a selfish man, and I do not make this proposal altogether for my own gratification."

"I know it is not, I know it is not," replied Annie Deer, and she wept.

"Oh, Annie," cried Mrs. Stanhope, "do not let the thoughts of our lost William prevent you from doing your duty towards your parents in such a terrible situation as this!"

The tears streamed from Mr. Deer's eyes, and he cried in a feeble voice, "Annie! Annie, my child, do not make yourself miserable for me!" That tone and that look were worth all the persuasions in the world, and the fatal consent hung upon the lips of Annie Deer, when the door behind her opened, and Mrs. Stanhope, who sat with her face towards it, started from her seat, and with one loud scream fell senseless on the floor. Annie turned to see what was the matter, and she, too, would have fallen, had she not been caught in the arms, and held to the heart of William Stanhope.

"Good God! what is the cause of all this?" he exclaimed: "every body seems frightened at me, the servants run away, my mother faints! Have you not received my letter?"

The scene of confusion that ensued, explanations, histories, inquiries, replies, fresh mistakes, and fresh *eclaircissemens*, though they were all comprised in the space of about an hour, would occupy a great many hours in the detail. At the end of that time, there were only two things which wanted explanation; the first of which was, what had become of two letters, one of which William Stanhope had sent from St. Helena on his way to India, telling that he had been shipwrecked; that when his vessel went down he had been saved in the last boat, and had been picked up by an outward-bound Indiaman; that he had preserved the bills in which all his little capital was invested; and that he intended to employ them in India, in the hope of recovering, in some degree, the terrible loss he had sustained. The second letter had been written from London three days before his re-appearance, and went to inform Mr. Deer that the loss of his vessel had proved, as far as he was concerned, the most fortunate chance that could have befallen him; that he had arrived in India at a happy moment; had made one of those successful speculations which were then not uncommon, and which the good name he had acquired while a mate in the service, had enabled him to extend far more than his own limited capital would have permitted; that, contented with one happy chance, and a moderate fortune, he had returned to England, and was com-

ing down to claim the hand of his fair bride, a far richer man than his most sanguine hopes had ever led him to anticipate. The loss of the first of these letters, William himself easily accounted for, by acknowledging that he entrusted it to a private hand—and every one who has had any thing to do with private hands, must be well aware that they are in general furnished with very slippery fingers. The loss of the second was justly accounted for by a surmise of Mr. John Pocock's, who suggested that, as postmasters—whether legally or not, we do not know—take upon themselves the infamous task of handing over the letters of bankrupts, public and private alike, to the assignees, exposing to the cold eyes of mercantile inquisitors all the secrets of domestic life, the anguish of the child's heart for the parent's misfortune, the agony of the parent for the downfall of his child, and the sweet communications and consolings of kindred affection, the counsel and the comfort, the care and the apprehension—as this evil and iniquitous practice, we say, is or was tolerated in the land, Mr. Pocock suggested that the letter of William Stanhope had very likely been sent to the assignees. And so it was. The letter had been so sent. The assignees were absent. And thus, for three long days, the letter was withheld from the only eye that should have seen it.

All that remained was the explanation between Mr. Pocock and William Stanhope, and that might have been very well omitted, if the former gentleman had pleased, for William had remarked nothing farther than that he was a good-looking old gentleman, and seemed to take a great interest in Mr. Deer's affairs. But Mr. Pocock, who had at first felt a little uneasy at the re-appearance of the young sailor, had soon made up his mind, like a sensible man, as he really was, to make the best of what he could not avoid, and to rejoice in the renewed happiness of others, though it brought a little disappointment to himself. He was resolved, however, to extract the satisfaction of a speech from the matter, and therefore, as soon as every thing else was settled, he got upon his legs, and proceeded—"Captain Stanhope," he said, "you have come just in time to prevent the completion of what

perhaps might have been a very bad bargain on all parts. The fact is, that I saw no earthly way of arranging the affairs of our good friend Mr. Deer, but by marrying his daughter. I had just made a bargain with her not to oppose her thinking of you with regret, when we all believed you dead, and God knows I shall as little oppose her thinking of you with affection, now we see that you are living. As you deprive me of the title of a husband, Captain Stanhope, I shall only demand that you grant me the name of a friend; and though I am a tolerably spruce old gentleman," he added, twitching his pigtail, "yet, as you have not found me a dangerous rival, you will doubtless not fear me as a dangerous acquaintance."

Captain Stanhope shook him by the hand, and willingly ratified the treaty he proposed. The days of Mr. Deer passed happily thenceforward to their close, and his daughter became the wife of Captain William Stanhope. Restored to affluence and comfort, she was the same gentle, unassuming, affectionate being she had ever been; and—though the good people of the little town where she continued to live, called her, with great reverence, Mrs. Captain Stanhope—to her husband and her family, she never changed her name, but remained *Annie dear* to the last day of her life.

THE NICE DOCTOR.

BY J. FORBES DALTON, ESQ.

"WELL, well, Monsieur Albert, I don't want to repeat what you can't like to hear. It's of no use to say the same thing over and over again, as we have been doing for the last hour. As for your never being happy without my daughter—bah! I know better, and so will you before long. She's a good girl, to be sure, but there are plenty more, plenty—enough for every body to find one. So, good luck to you!"

Thus said old Jouffray, a flourishing silk-manufacturer of Lyons, to young Albert Cluneau, a lieutenant on half-pay, at the end of a conversation, the purport of which no reader can be at a loss to guess. An unpleasant interview was that for both parties; inasmuch as the old gentleman's doors had always been open to young Albert, from his youth upward; and somehow he had latterly become an especial favourite, notwithstanding his father's death, which left him with little more than his sword and his commission.

"I feel my presumption, monsieur," sighed the doleful lover; "I have been rash. Certainly an obscure *demi-solde* ought not to aspire to one placed so far above him in fortune as Ma'mselle Cesarine. But, it was not yesterday, monsieur, that I first——"

"Bah! bah!" exclaimed Monsieur Jouffray, interrupting him, "don't take it into your head that I am rich. We never know what we are worth in trade. Up and down go the markets. The workmen become riotous. Goods go out of fashion. Bad debts, &c. &c. &c. No use talking to you about such matters. Wish you'd been brought up to mercantile pursuits, though. Some chance of getting a few hundred thousand francs together then;

but, *now*——” and he concluded with an expressive shrug of the shoulders.

“Hundreds of thousands of francs!” groaned Albert, with an expression of mingled astonishment and despair.

“Ay, ay,” said the merchant, wishing to get away from further importunities. “Must look to the future. Don’t suppose, though, that I’d sell my child for money, against her will. Not made of that sort of stuff. Only must have something for the *ménage*. So, to show you I’ve no ill-will, or bad opinion of you, I tell you plainly that, if you had but one hundred thousand francs, and Cesarine liked you as well as you say you like her, I would make no farther objections. However, as matters are, you had better look out for somebody else. Bah! don’t look so dismal. Never fear! People don’t die for love in France. But I am wanted in the counting-house.”

The interview then terminated, somewhat abruptly, by a shake of the hand and a *Bon jour* ;” and, from that day the lieutenant never could contrive to call when his old friends were “at home.”

Now Cesarine, the subject of the above conversation, and very many more which followed between her father and mother, was altogether an exceedingly pleasant young lady to look at. Nature seemed to have intended her for a remarkably pretty brunette; but, somehow, though her hair and eyes were dark, nothing could be more delicately clear and white than her complexion. Perhaps the superabundant care that her parents took of their only child, operating in unison with the atmosphere of a large city, might have tended thus to blanch a flower, which purer air and the blessed sunbeams would have caused to blow with more brilliant and dazzling beauty. This supposition, indeed, always seemed more probable, after she had enjoyed a ride or walk along the banks of the Saone, or upon the higher grounds which separate that river from the rapid Rhone. Then the glow of health would thrill and linger for a while upon her cheek, adding an evanescent charm to features otherwise too delicately resembling the finest efforts of unrivalled sculpture.

Romantically beautiful are the immediate environs of Lyons. Steep hills and beetling fantastic rocks, broad

vine-clad declivities, reaching to the water's edge, and narrow woody glens, are there : but, more than all, the gently curving small "valons," sweeping away from the river's banks, and here and there darkened by luxuriant vegetation, where the trembling aspen, the lofty acacia, and the solemn gloom of the linden grove, form a striking contrast with the barren rocks above. These, particularly the latter, continue to be the chosen resorts of lovers and others, who are fond of solitude ; and, though his name is often on their lips, would doubtless have been used for the same purpose, had they never been the favourite walks of Jean Jacques Rousseau.

As Monsieur Jouffray was constantly engaged in his business, and Madame Jouffray completely occupied during the day with her household affairs, and Mademoiselle Cesarine had a lively *bonne amie* for her confidante, and Lieutenant Cluneau had no sort of duty to perform, save that of watching their movements, it would have been somewhat extraordinary if he had not contrived to catch a glimpse of his mistress elsewhere, since he never could find her "at home." Whether such an idea, or the generous desire of serving his young friend, were uppermost in the merchant's thoughts, matters little ; but, some weeks after the lover's declaration, he had the honour of a farewell visit from a general officer, about to depart to assume the command of a distant province. A formal "P. P. C." accorded not with Monsieur Jouffray's ideas of hospitality ; so the ceremonious call became an unceremonious, but by no means unsubstantial dinner.

The general and his staff accepted the invitation, *sans façon*, and did exceeding honour to their host's good fare and excellent wines, particularly the latter. Thus it came to pass that, when the hour for saying adieu arrived, the gallant guest expressed himself infinitely obliged for all the polite attentions that he had received during his sojourn in Lyons, and finished by declaring that nothing would afford him more pleasure than an opportunity of serving his worthy host.

"Never fear applying to me, monsieur," said he. "If what you wish lie in my power, it shall be done. I am *au desespoir* at the idea of quitting such amiable friends ;

but, we soldiers—" and he concluded, after a significant shrug, "I wish monsieur had a son in the army. He should not be forgotten, rely upon it."

Upon this hint, our worthy manufacturer ventured to speak a few words in behalf of Albert Cluneau, whom he described as a young man of excellent principles and abilities, but withal of a warm imagination and ardent temperament—qualities which rendered an indolent life in a large city peculiarly dangerous to him.

"Well, monsieur," observed the general gaily, "I have no doubt we shall be able to find room for him: but tell me candidly—for I always like to know something of the foibles, as well as the good qualities of my officers—tell me candidly what sort of temptation, in this your great city, you imagine most dangerous to your young friend. Is it gaming, extravagance, billiards? I shall post him accordingly."

"Nothing of the kind, Monsieur le General," replied the merchant. "The fact is—ahem!—that is, I have reason to fear that, for want of something better to do, he is getting entangled in a love affair, which cannot lead him into any good, but, on the contrary, may——"

"We'll soon arrange that," exclaimed the general. "Belles are every where; but the one present is always worth all the rest. *Soyez tranquille, mon ami.*"

The result of this leave-taking was an official announcement to Albert Cluneau, in consequence of which he left Lyons, with a heavy heart, to join a regiment then at Grenoble, whence it was to march he knew not whither.

Some months had elapsed, and autumn was on the wane, when Dr. Lestrangle, the family physician, was closeted with Madame Jouffray, to whom he discoursed at considerable length, of nerves, and lungs, and pulmonary processes, and the effects of a smoky atmosphere, and confinement, &c. &c.

"We have always lived here, and been very well," observed the unsophisticated dame. "Indeed, I think our air is particularly wholesome; so, what can ail our dear child I can't think."

"As I have had the honour of explaining to you, madam," resumed the Doctor, "our atmosphere, besides

being deprived, by extraneous causes, of a considerable portion of oxygen, is become a buoyant medium, impregnated with fuliginous particles, which imperceptibly disunite almost to atomical minutæ, so that in the process of inhalation——”

“Well, my dear sir,” groaned madame, interrupting him, “I must refer you to my husband: but I really don’t think he can manage to leave his business.”

“If Mademoiselle does not spend the winter at Nice, I will not answer for the consequences,” observed the Doctor, authoritatively.

If any one should inquire when a physician was ever made answerable for “consequences,” be it observed, that Lyons was included in the old kingdom of Burgundy, wherein lived in the olden time two *médécins*, named Nicholas and Donat, of great celebrity, no doubt, as they were called in to attend upon the queen. Her majesty, (Queen Austrégilde,) however, got worse and worse, and at last died; but not till she had requested her husband (Gontran) to bury her two *médécins* with her. The king promised, and her wish was literally complied with.

Doubtless this and other persecutions, which our space admits not of relating, were known to Dr. Lestrangle, and probably may have originated the professional disclamatory phrase now so general. But to our tale.

Monsieur Jouffray listened patiently enough, while the Doctor talked in scientific terms beyond his comprehension; but, when the subject of purer and milder air was introduced, he could not refrain from observing, somewhat brusquely, “Eh! what? go away from Lyons for pure and mild air? You cannot be serious. There is no spot in France, and of course nowhere else in the universe, to be compared to it. I have lived here all my life, and never knew what illness was—bah! However, I don’t mind taking a country-house, if you think that will do Cesarine any good; but, as for leaving my business, and going over the mountains, and nobody knows where—bah! it’s ridiculous.”

The Doctor, however, stuck to his point with a tenacity which surprised the worthy couple exceedingly, inasmuch as such was not his wonted habit, and, moreover,

his advice appeared contrary to his interest. This last consideration wrought powerfully upon Monsieur Jouffray, when he began to cogitate upon the subject; so he took a map of the southern coast, and, finding that Nice lay on the border of Italy, it struck him that the expensive and hitherto deemed useless journey might be converted into a profitable mercantile speculation.

"Humph!" said he, running his fore-finger along the outline of the bay, "it seems but a step to Genoa, and then across to Turin. Bah! it's no distance. Nothing like dealing on the spot. My stock of silk is getting low: I can buy largely, and pay ready money, too. That's something, I know, in Piedmont. I see plainly I shall make a good thing of it. When I have once settled the ladies in a good house, they won't want me till it's time to return home."

Having thus resolved, few preparations were needful; and, on the third day, the little family-party embarked on board a commodious, though somewhat clumsy-looking vessel. But its apparent strength gave a feeling of security to the inexperienced voyagers, and pleasant, inexpressibly pleasant, was it to one on board, to feel herself borne rapidly along upon the glorious Rhone. As tower, and hill, and village-spire seemed to fly past, she felt as though wafted by wings towards Italy; and, if she had any wish, it was that they could be as the wings of the eagle, to pursue the setting sun.

"*Ma foi!*" exclaimed Monsieur Jouffray, on their arrival at Arles, "it's very extraordinary! The child seems to be better already. I suppose there must be something in the change of air, for I'm sure it's not better here than at Lyons. I hope she will be able to bear the over-land journey as well. I will take care to have an easy carriage, and not make the days' journeys too long."

All this was very kind of Papa Jouffray; but, to say the truth, no one seemed so much fatigued at the end of each subsequent day's journey as the good man himself; and, on their arrival at Marseilles, he proposed a halt, in order, as he said, "to see the lions." But, in reality, he grudged the time spent without doing business, and hoped

to occupy a few hours profitably among his correspondents in that city. Right glad was he, therefore, to meet at his hotel the general with whom he had parted on such friendly terms: more particularly when that officer and his staff volunteered to take the ladies under their protection, and "show them everything."

So the brief time of their sojourning was extremely agreeable and refreshing to all, till the eve of their departure, when the general took an opportunity of privately condoling with Monsieur Jouffray upon the alteration in his daughter's health and appearance.

"*Ma foi!* Monsieur le General!" exclaimed the father, "what can you mean? She was never better. Can bear travelling as well as you or I can. Should have turned back home again, if it hadn't been for some little affairs of my own at Genoa."

"Don't deceive yourself, my dear sir," observed the general, gravely. "You are in the habit of seeing her daily, and, therefore, do not perceive the change; but," (here he shook his head), "but, my friend, that pain in the side, that flush upon the cheek! I am sorry to speak thus to you. It is best to be prepared. You certainly cannot do better than take her to Nice, and it is because you are going thither, that I have introduced this painful subject. Here is a letter to a very old friend of mine high in the medical department, who intends to pass the winter there. If any man can cure your daughter, he is the man; but, I must warn you that he is very eccentric, and likes better to attend the poor than the rich. I have also heard strange tales of his exorbitant charges to the latter, when they would call him in against his inclination. Circumstances have occurred between us, which I may confidently say will give my introduction no common weight; and, if time allowed, I could relate instances of his skill that seem absolutely miraculous."

Monsieur Jouffray returned thanks, took the letter, shrugged his shoulders, declared that it was all a mistake, and that Cesarine was going on admirably and so forth; but the general nevertheless shook his head incredulously, and finally took leave of the somewhat more anxious fa-

ther, with a sigh and a most deploring, compassionate, rueful countenance.

Monsieur Jouffray very considerably forbore from mentioning this conversation to his spouse; but could not avoid watching his daughter's looks and conduct more closely during the remainder of their journey.

The consequence was a degree of alarm respecting her, which he had never before experienced. Ever and anon, when the carriage was jolted violently, she would place her hand upon her side, while an expression of anguish came over her countenance. Moreover, a languor, which he had not previously noticed, now appeared almost always to be upon her, and she would sit silent sometimes for hours. Even when her lively and particular friend and companion, Fanchette Dubois, roused and excited her to smile, the impulse lasted but a few minutes, and then she would shake her head, put her hand to her side, and relapse into her former lethargy. In this state, matters continued when they crossed the river Var and arrived at Nice, just as the golden gleams of the setting sun were fading away from the face of the broad blue sea.

"Bah!" exclaimed Monsieur Jouffray, when joining his family at breakfast, after taking his morning walk as usual; "bah! compare this place with Lyons! It's one of the most *triste* towns I ever saw. They've a promenade, it's true: but where do you think it is? You'll never guess. No shade to it—not a bit, though the sun is already as fierce as if it was summer. Why, it's along the top of a row of houses! Bah! One theatre, and that Italian. Bah! no commerce, that I can see. Didn't meet a single laden charrette. Another mutton cutlet, if you please, Cesarine. Holloa, garçon! what wine do you call this?"

"Ordinaire," replied the waiter; "but, if monsieur would prefer any other—" and he handed a tolerably long *carte* wherefrom to choose.

But monsieur replied, "Presently, perhaps," and when the "garçon" went out, continued, "Ordinaire! Diâble!"

Here be it observed that, when a Frenchman finds any thing unexpectedly good, he exclaims, "Diâble!" but if, on the contrary, it be execrably bad, he ejaculates, "Mon

Dieu!" How such habits can have arisen, it is not our affair to inquire, but we can vouch for the fact.

In the present instance, Monsieur Jouffray had taken a very different sort of appetizing walk from that which was his usual custom, along the quay of the Rhone, where, with his hands behind him, he would move to and fro, at a sentinel's pace, gravely chatting with some mercantile friend of his own age. He had now risen early, in order literally to run through (*parcourir*) the town. The sea-air might have had something to do with the matter; but it is one thing to saunter because one *must* take exercise, and another to be excited into rapid motion by curiosity. So, altogether, the worthy merchant's déjeuner à la fourchette seemed unto him most excellent, and he could not avoid discharging another "Diâble!" over a dish of anchovies, which had not been an hour out of their native element.

His next task was to find lodgings, and in that pursuit his temper was sorely tried by what he deemed the exorbitant demands of the natives. At last, he fixed upon part of a house, in the suburb called La Croix de Marbre, commanding a fine view of the bay, and having a garden and outlet to the sea-shore upon the English Walk. Upon hearing this latter name, he could not help remarking, that he wished the English would walk off altogether, for their coming served only to double the price of everything.

The first week was spent by our family-party in little excursions and promenades to explore the neighbourhood. They went to Villa Franca, visited the Roman amphitheatre at Cimiers, and walked up the old castle rock, now standing in the centre of Nice, the base of which forms a triangle, with one of its sides upon the sea-shore. The blue sky was without a cloud; the land was evergreen with innumerable and ancient olive-trees; and the air fragrant with the odour of the orange gardens. Flowers, too, were abundant, and yet it was the commonly called "gloomy" month of November.

"*Ma foi!*" said monsieur, one night to madame, "there is some difference in climate, after all; though this eternal sunshine does not exactly suit my eyes. I

often wish to be in the counting-house instead. I hope, however, it will do Cesarine good. She seems better already than when we first arrived."

"I fear not," replied the mother; "she was complaining to me this afternoon of that pain in her side; though, to look at her only, I should be of your opinion."

Thus commenced between the parents a very long conversation, the result of which was, that Monsieur Jouffray resolved to deliver the general's letter to his friend, the doctor, on the following morning.

He was received with ease and politeness by the medical gentleman, who exhibited no symptoms of eccentricity, until he had perused the epistle. Then, with an odd sardonic grin, he muttered, "Bah! He thinks I can cure anybody of anything! That was always the way in service. Send 'em to Proteau! Send 'em to Proteau! And so I had always the worst cases. Well—those are not always the worst for practice. So I have had plenty of experience. However, monsieur," he continued, turning to his visiter, "I'm tired of the profession now, and came here for a little peace and quiet. What's the matter with your son?"

"I beg your pardon, Monsieur le Docteur," said Monsieur Jouffray, "you are under an error. It is my daughter."

Doctor Proteau referred to the letter, and then observed carelessly, "Oh, ah! I see—so it is. Well. You've done quite right in bringing her here. Delightful climate, eh? She'll do very well, I dare say. Plenty of mules and donkeys here. They're the best doctors. Don't let 'em poison her with physic. Faugh! What did you say was the matter with her?"

Monsieur Jouffray stated that it was some internal complaint, of what nature he could not say, but he wished for the doctor's opinion and advice. In reply, the doctor said that he would much rather not have anything to do with the matter, as he wished to be entirely without patients for a time, in order to finish a medical work that he had in hand. However, after much entreaty, he agreed, with great apparent reluctance, to have an interview with mademoiselle, stipulating that no one else

should be present. "As I have not the honour of knowing your good lady," said he, "I cannot mean any personal disrespect to her: but I never wish to hear any but a patient describe her own feelings. A third person that *will* talk bothers one. And as for keeping a mother quiet on such occasions, bah! madame and I can chat the matter over afterwards."

On his return home, Monsieur Jouffray had some difficulty in obtaining madame's ratification of this agreement; nor did she consent till, after speaking much of what the general said of Dr. Proteau's extraordinary talents, he added that the latter was by no means a good-looking man, and, *certainly*, fifty years of age.

So the doctor came and had a long private interview with Cesarine, who came forth therefrom with glistening eyes, and declared that he was a most wonderful man, that he had described every symptom of her complaint, and that she felt the most entire confidence in his judgment.

With the parents, however, the doctor was very laconic. "It's of no use," said he, bluntly, "to talk to you in professional terms. You wouldn't understand me. The simple fact is, that Mademoiselle Cesarine has been very injudiciously treated by those who ought to have known better. They have allowed her disorder to attain a dangerous height, and then treated it lightly. It has been gradually increasing for years."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Monsieur Jouffray.

"My poor child!" exclaimed madame! "I never thought that that foolish Dr. Lestranger knew anything about her complaint. I wish we had never seen him, with his jabbering hard words about pulminations and such gibberish! All to hide his own ignorance."

"What's to be done, my dear sir?" cried the father, imploringly. "I'd give anything to have her restored to health. I would spare no expense—none. For she is our only child."

"Well, then," said the Doctor, calmly, "you need not be uneasy about her, for I can cure her. So you have only to give me a hundred thousand francs, and consider the business as settled."

Both Monsieur and Madame were literally struck speechless at this abrupt and most extraordinary proposition, and gazed and gaped at each other, as though questioning whether they were not in the presence of a lunatic. The awkward pause was broken by Dr. Proteau, who coolly observed, "If you do not happen to have so much by you, your note of hand will do just as well. From my friend, the general's letter, I am perfectly aware with whom I have the honour of speaking."

"*Nom de Dieu!*" shrieked Monsieur Jouffray, "who and what do you take me for, that you speak of such a sum as though it were a mere bagatelle?"

"Precisely so," observed the imperturbable doctor, "I do consider it a mere bagatelle. What is such a trifle, when compared with the life of an only child?"

"You must be joking, monsieur," said madame, with an arch, coaxing smile.

"Not at all," replied the doctor; "I am perfectly serious, and never allow myself to chaffer or be chaffered with. There are other medical men in Nice; consult them, if you think proper. However, mademoiselle shall not suffer from delay; I will send her something to take this morning, which I shall just have time to mix up before I take a ride with a friend to Mont Calvo. Therefore, excuse my abrupt departure. Consider my present visit and what I shall send to mademoiselle merely as an evidence of my respect for monsieur le general and his friends: but, for the last time, remember that, if you wish for my attendance professionally, I never did, and never will, deviate from terms which I have once specified, unless indeed I were to fail in performing a perfect cure; and, in that case, I should scorn to pocket a single sous."

As he uttered the last words he rose, and politely took leave of the bewildered couple, who, after a very brief consultation, resolved to seek medical advice at a less exorbitant rate elsewhere; and, with that intent, they walked into town, whence they did not return till the hour of dinner.

In the mean time, Cesarine had received the bottle promised by the doctor, and had taken one small glass from it. The effects did, indeed, appear miraculous.

She declared that everything she ate or drank seemed to have acquired a more delicious flavour, that the pain in her side was entirely gone, and she described her feelings as being altogether changed.

All this ought to have been exceedingly gratifying to her parents, and assuredly was so to a certain extent; nevertheless, both, and particularly the father, appeared occasionally to be lost in a reverie, and the latter looked altogether as though it were a doubtful case whether good or evil had happened unto him. That night, of course, another consultation took place between the worthy couple, and terminated in a decision to call in another physician, since it appeared to them exceedingly ridiculous to suppose that Dr. Proteau was so infinitely superior to all others of the profession as to entitle him to a little fortune for curing a single patient.

The gentleman to whom they now had recourse was a venerable practitioner. No man could listen more patiently to the details of a case. First, he was closeted with the mother, then with the daughter, and afterward with both; but he declined giving his opinion to either, and requested a private audience of the father, to whom he said, "It is best to speak plainly. Had it been my good fortune to have been introduced to your interesting child when her complaint was in its infancy, I should have known how to treat her; but now"—here he shook his head mournfully—"I cannot, I dare not, undertake the case. The fact is, that the internal symptoms are become so complicated as completely to baffle my skill; and my name and medical reputation stand so high at this moment, that it would be a kind of suicidal act for me to undertake a case, the termination of which would materially injure both. Do not despise me for this honest confession. There is a limit to all human knowledge and skill. A sense of my own incapacity alone prevents me from acting, but I am happy to add that I will not leave you without hope. Most fortunate is it, that you have brought mademoiselle into this delightful climate at this particular season, for we have now a visiter, a most extraordinary character, come to pass the winter here. I have studied much, monsieur, and had long and extensive

practice; and, though I say it, much success; but this gentleman is—*pardi!* if the days of magic were not gone by, I should really think that this Dr. Proteau had supernatural agents at his command!" He then launched out into an enthusiastic panegyric upon the said doctor, concluding with instances of his eccentricity, all of which, however ridiculous they might appear, had always some good end in view.

Monsieur Jouffray attempted to persuade the venerable man that he was too diffident of his own abilities, but all was in vain; and, at last, the doctor ended their conversation by a sufficiently startling observation. "No," said he, "I'll have nothing to do with it. The funeral of a young patient would deprive me of my rich nervous English patients."

Never before had poor Monsieur Jouffray felt so perplexed. He cogitated, and cogitated, and sighed, and uttered divers unseemly ejaculations, as Dr. Proteau's extortionate demand ever and anon crossed his mind. Madame behaved more philosophically, and, after a few natural tears, reminded him that the eccentric physician had affirmed that he would not receive anything unless the cure were perfect.

"Where is Cesarine? I'll talk to her myself," exclaimed the father, starting from a long reverie.

On inquiry, it was discovered that she had been gone out more than two hours walking with her friend. Two more hours elapsed, and the good couple were beginning to fear some disaster, when the said Cesarine rushed into the room, in a right merry mood, with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, declaring that she had walked at least three leagues, and felt as if she could walk as many more.

"It's all that wonderful Dr. Proteau," observed Mademoiselle DuBois. Poor Cesarine has been taking physic for months and months, and always getting worse; and now only a single phial, and that not half empty! I positively wish I was ill myself, in order to have such a doctor."

"But, my dear child," said Monsieur Jouffray, "how is this? I understand that you had described your symp-

toms of illness only this morning to the physician, and he said——"

"Oh, no, papa!" exclaimed Cesarine, laughing, "I only told him how I had felt before I got this charming medicine. I'm quite well now. Allons, Fanchette, it's time to dress for dinner, and I've *such* an appetite!—I'm glad we dine by ourselves, or I really should be quite ashamed.—Oh! I forgot; there is to be a ball at the governor's on Tuesday: you *must* take us, papa! Nay, don't look so serious! I'm quite well now, I assure you; so do take us!" and, playfully throwing her arms round his neck, she snatched a kiss, and then went dancing out of the room.

"Oh, that dear, dear doctor!" exclaimed Fanchette, following her; "he's worth his weight in gold!"

"Humph!" grunted Monsieur Jouffray, more testily than beeseemed the occasion, "he *means* to be worth it, I suppose; but—pish! bah!—a hundred thousand francs! Peste!" and forthwith he paced the room after the fashion of a wild beast caught in a trap.

A journal of each day's proceedings would be somewhat tedious; briefly, then, Cesarine was all health and spirits till the wonderful phial was empty; and from that time she began to decline and droop, and the pain in her side, lassitude, and other alarming symptoms returned, to the great dismay of her parents. Monsieur Jouffray held out stoutly for some time against submitting to what he was pleased to term "gross imposition and unfeeling avarice;" but, at length, his good lady put the question seriously to him, whether, if their daughter were in her grave, he would not give more than a hundred thousand francs to bring her to life.

So, with a heavy heart and doleful countenance, he betook himself to the residence of Dr. Proteau, and began to *marchander* with him; but he had scarcely commenced, when the doctor interrupted him by saying, "Do not let us waste time, monsieur. I am told that a merchant considers his word as binding as his bond: am I right? Do you always consider yourself bound in honour to perform whatever you say you will do, provided the conditions stipulated be fulfilled?"

"Certainly!" replied Monsieur Jouffray, warmly; "I never did forfeit my word, and I never will."

"No more will I," said the doctor. "So all that you have to do is to give me your bill for the amount named, to be paid when your daughter is perfectly cured; but, in case of failure on my part, to be nothing more than waste paper."

"I cannot afford such a sum," said Monsieur Jouffray; "you think me rich, but——"

"That alters the case," exclaimed Dr. Proteau; "let it be inserted in the agreement, or bill, that if you can prove yourself to be not worth more than five times the amount, I will then abandon the whole claim."

Monsieur Jouffray here stammered a little; but, at length, said something about the apparent inhumanity of allowing a fellow-creature to sink into the grave, unless a specific enormous amount were raised.

"That is a question for her parent, *who has the means*, to consider," observed the doctor, calmly.

More conversation followed to little effect, and it was not till a fortnight afterwards that Monsieur Jouffray, worried, as he declared, by his spouse and Mademoiselle Dubois, and tormented by apprehensions for his daughter, agreed to sign the document in question. It has, indeed, been said since that his decision was somewhat accelerated by a letter from Lyons, informing him of the arrival of large orders from America, in consequence of which silk was likely to advance. Be that as it may, no sooner had he signed the bill than he took himself off for Genoa and Piedmont, comforted by the doctor's assurance that he would find Cesarine perfectly recovered before his return.

So the good man went his way at a most fortunate moment for his speculations, and made large purchases of silk, which was scarcely in his possession when the rise in the market more than compensated him for the eccentric doctor's fee. Then he returned to Nice, where he found smiling faces and a warm welcome, but for some cause Cesarine blushed deeply when he congratulated her upon her improved looks. There was something odd, too, he thought, in the manners of his wife and Made-

moiselle Dubois; but he saw that they were all happy; so he kissed them all round, and shortly afterwards in came Dr. Proteau, with whom he shook hands warmly, for his heart was right glad within him at what he saw, and moreover he was flushed with success. "If I had not come to Nice," said he, "I never should have gone to Piedmont, and so I suppose I must not grumble: but you must confess *now*, doctor, that your terms were sadly too high."

"The remedy which I have applied is worth considerable more," replied the doctor. "Here it is in the next room, and I recommend you never to let Mademoiselle Cesarine part from it any more."

"Well," said Monsieur Jouffray, "that is doing more than you promised. Where's the bill? I'll give you an order on demand on my bankers. That's the way we merchants do business. I told you I never did and never will forfeit my word. Where's the bill?"

"Here it is, monsieur," said a clear but tremulous voice, very different from that of Dr. Proteau.

"Eh! what! Albert Cluneau!" exclaimed Monsieur Jouffray.

"Yes, monsieur," said the young man, bowing respectfully, "I take the liberty of presenting *my* bill, and reminding you of our last conversation, in which you told me that if I could contrive to get but one hundred thousand francs——"

"Bah, bah!" exclaimed Monsieur Jouffray, "you must have misunderstood. But *your* bill! How!"

"I have transferred the bill to Captain Cluneau," said the doctor.

"Captain Cluneau!" cried Monsieur Jouffray.

"Yes, Captain Cluneau!" shouted a loud voice from behind the door, which Albert had left open, and forthwith in marched the worthy general, saying, "Captain he is, and I've come to thank you, my dear friend, for recommending to me a most excellent officer." I hope some day to see him a general. It would have been a sad thing to have left him idling his time at Lyons. Ten to one but he had got into some scrape or entanglement."

"Hem, ahem!" coughed Monsieur Jouffray. "But how came he here?"

"I posted him at St. Laurent," replied the general, "and it is but a step from that to this place, over the hills and along the vallons, and pleasant walking under the shade of the olive trees."

"And I," said Dr. Proteau, "I recommended air and exercise to mademoiselle, and so it *happened*——"

"Bah, bah! Don't say any more!" cried Monsieur Jouffray; "I see it all now. A regular conspiracy. You've outmanœuvred me, general. Isn't that the word? come the old soldier over me, eh, Albert? Well, well, I believe I was wrong, for you're a good lad, and I knew your father, and so I won't be worse than my word, and if Cesarine——"

"*En avant, Cluneau!*" shouted the general; and, even as though her name had been the word of command, it had scarcely passed her father's lips before Cesarine found herself locked in the embrace of her lover.

"What a charming doctor!" exclaimed Fanchette Dubois.

RIGOUR OF THE LAW IN 1657.

AN HISTORICAL FACT.

RELATED BY MRS. GORE.

"Your views are doubtless noble, nor would I insinuate that your confidence is misplaced," observed Major Dewey to his brother-in-law, George Strangwayes, as they were riding together towards Blandford, from the neighbouring farm of Mussen, the property of the latter gentleman. "'Tis now near upon eight years since your father died, and you came into possession of the estate of Mussen. Since then, it has been your pleasure to leave Mistress Mabellah in possession of the place; nor would I insinuate but that the farm, (considering her feeble sex and lonely condition,) has been sagely administered."

"The place prospers," answered Major Strangwayes carelessly; "the plantations are rising—the land is improved. Did you notice to-day, brother Dewey, the fine crop of wheat standing in West Croft, which in my father's time produced little besides docks and thistles? This change had scarcely been, had a short-sighted, long-armed soldier like myself remained at the head of affairs. I have not patience for a farmer, heaven help me! If a saucy farm-knave outbraves me in his duty, 'tis a word and a blow, or rather a blow wordless. Down goes he, flat as the thrashing-floor; and then there are broken pates to be answered for at Mr. Justice's, and fines, and, may be, worse; because, forsooth, my cavalier blood is too hot in my veins to bear the insolence of a hireling."

"Pray heaven the heat of your cavalier blood betray you not, sooner or later, into a sorer strait!" responded

the sober major, a member of the Rump Parliament, and, in political as in religious principles, wholly opposed to the brother-in-law, to whom he was linked by ties of worldly interest. "Pray heaven you may be convinced in time that mischief hunts out the violent man, and that the Lord only should be the repayer of vengeance!"

"And a slow paymaster, too!" muttered Strangways between his teeth, as he whisked off with his riding wand a tendril of the dog-roses interlacing the green lane through which they were pacing, "or you and yours would scarcely have the upper hand this day of King Charles's loyal subjects, to read a sermon to my patience!" Then, turning towards the sedate Dewey, he resumed: "But, as touching this affair of Mussen Farm, I protest to you that I see no cause to misdoubt the prudent government of my sister. Mabellah is of grave years, (my elder, God-a-mercy, by ten!) past the time of wiving, and, still more, (with reverence to her spinsterhood,) of all wild inclinations, I could scarce choose a more home-staying steward; and, since her savings and sparings will of likelihood revert to myself, her only brother and heir, why harass the poor woman during her lifetime by denying so poor a concession as the possession of the bond you wot of?"

"The Lord keep me from insinuating aught against the prudence or principles of my sister-in-law!" replied the major; "nevertheless, flesh is frail, and—"

"Frail—with gray hairs sprouting on the brow, and a beard sprouting on the chin?" cried the major laughing. "Frail! go to—I can scarce rebuke your sauciness, seeing the absurdity of such insinuations. Bless your cautious soul! Mabel is as chaste in thought and deed as word; for, behold! is she not a sister of your own congregation, pure in doctrine and demeanour, as Tabitha or Eunice of old? I tell ye, too, good major, the bond is but a toy! At *your* suggestion I caused it to be drawn out when I gave her up possession of Mussen; only for the better understanding of those to come after us, that the farm was not only mine, conceded in leasehold to my sister, but that the stock and plenishing, and certain moneys left in trust for their keeping up, are mine also.

Within these three months, poor Mabel, in her fidgets lest the hazards of my somewhat wayward life might throw the document into less worthy hands, has been eager to have it in her possession. And why not? Are we not one flesh! Is not the same blood flowing in our veins? Not as holy mother church proclaims of man and wife—figuratively and typically—but truly, warmly, absolutely—even as nature created us: and shall I fear to entrust her with a paltry parchment, involving a thousand pounds or so of worldly pelf? No, no, brother Dewey! There were no longer good faith to hope for in the world, if banished from the bosom of a loyal family like that of Strangeways, of Mussen!”

“You said, methinks, friend George,” pertinaciously resumed the major, “that ’twas *within these three months*, Mistress Mabellah had shown herself eager to obtain possession of the bond? *That tallies!*”

“What tallies—and tallies with what!” cried the blunt Strangeways, suddenly pulling up his horse, and looking the parliamentarian in the face.

“Nay—nothing—nothing but an idle thought that troubled me!” murmured Dewey, pushing on.

“Out with it, man, and ’twill trouble no more!” cried his brother-in-law.

“A thought once spoken is like a fountain loosed,” quoth the major.

“And a fountain pent engendereth troubled waters,” replied Strangeways, cheerfully. “Speak, therefore. What (of evil or good portent to Mussen Farm) hath chanced within the last three months?”

“Heard ye not of the death of that thrifty and believing matron, Mistress Rebekah Fussell?” demanded Dewey.

“Let her die and —”

“Nay,” interrupted the major, misdoubting how vile a word was to follow. “but consider that this mischance leaveth our friend Obadiah Fussell a widower.”

“It might leave him Attorney General to the Protector, or the devil himself, for aught I cared to the contrary.”

“For, to the contrary of *such* appointments, your in-

terests prevail not!" responded Dewey. "But as a man of single estate, (excuse the jocularity!) Master Fussell may cast a covetous eye upon the estate of Mussen."

"Put the affront of courtship upon a sister of mine!" cried the major, with kindling eyes. "Obadiah Fussell—the attorney of Blandford! Fussell! the sneaking, pitiful, crop-eared—"

"I pray you, peace!" cried Dewey, terrified by this outburst of cholera, and looking cautiously at either hedge, lest, peradventure, the man they spake of might be lurking there in ambush. "Bethink you, good brother George, that words meaning offence to Fussell mean offence also unto me. Let it be no matter of *party*; let it be a matter of man and man; ay, and of woman, too, since the weaker vessel must needs be concerned, in the person of our good sister Mabel! Yet, though I would by no means insinuate disparagement of the right meaning of Master Fussell, I must in all candour admit—"

"Speak out, and be d—— to you!" cried the impatient major. "In two words—the point! What views has attorney Fussell upon Mabellah Strangways?"

"Marriage; and by marriage possession of her person and estates," said Dewey stoutly.

"The designing villain!" cried Strangways, involuntarily clenching his fist. "Woo a wife of Mabel's years, (even in her youth so hard-favoured as never to have found a suitor, and now fouler-faced than the old woman of Endor,) in order to obtain possession of goods and chattels not her own; and to bestow them doubtless on the whelps of his former brood, to the despoilment of my sister's legal heirs! I'll learn the truth on't—ay! and see the end on't!" cried he, suddenly wheeling round, and turning back towards Mussen. And, with the unhappy Dewey vainly spurring to keep up with him, or at least to attain sufficient proximity for remonstrance, he galloped on at speed, and drew rein only beside the gateway of the farm.

Alas! the fat hackney of the Blandford attorney was there before him, carefully fastened to the palings; and, having stridden his way towards the parlour, where Mistress Mabellah was accustomed to sit of an afternoon

spinning with her maids, instead of the hum of the wheel, habitual there at that hour, the drone of a hypocritical voice saluted the ear of George Strangways as he threw open the door.

"I am half answered already," ejaculated he, reddening with rage, on perceiving the palsy attorney wheezing forth his adoration into the ear of his withered sister. "Still I would fain have a plain word in satisfaction of a plain inquiry."

Fussell, who had risen in confusion on the bluff soldier's entrance, turned towards Mabellah, as if for explanation of this appeal.

"You, sir!" continued Strangways, addressing him, "you, with lawn weeper and crape hatband—you—attorney!—presbyterian!—roundhead!—what shall I call ye?—Answer, what brings ye to Mussen?"

The attorney, thus fiercely interrogated, showed no haste to comply; but Mabellah, apprehensive perhaps that her first suitor (and no doubt her last,) might be browbeaten from his purpose if not promptly reinforced, answered, with a degree of coldness that might be termed, by courtesy, composure, "This gentleman, brother, is here by *my* invitation, and will be upheld by *my* sense of hospitality."

"Sense of tomfoolery!" rejoined the irate George. "Dupe that ye are, and worse!—How, Mabel, at *your* years—gray, wrinkled, doting—are ye to be blinded by evil wishes into a belief that this fellow, this quill-driving, skin-engrossing, *two, ten*-faced hypocrite, has other thoughts in his courtship than to fleece the old ewe of her wool?"

"Sir! you lack courtesy!" interrupted Fussell, restraining himself so readily that not a tinge of choler brightened his sallow unimpassioned visage; "courtesy to me and to this lady—*my* plighted wife."

"Plighted *wife*!"—shouted Strangways, in a tone that suspended the step of poor Dewey upon the threshold. "When she who, for twenty miserable years, bore with the pinchings of your miserly household and the gripings of your hard-fisted tyranny, has lain but three months in her grave! Out on ye both, for outragers of

all private principle and public decency!" and, turning his back upon his sister and her demure Celadon, he flung himself breathless into a seat.

"Were it not prudent, sister, for your *friend* to depart?" whispered Dewey, drawing nigh unto Mabellah, who stood smoothing down her lawir' apron, as scarcely knowing whether to wax penitent or angry. "Not that I would insinuate violence; but, of a verity, our friend George is chafed beyond the bounds of discretion, and —"

"Ay! let him sneak away, like a beaten dog as he is," cried Strangwayes, having overheard this expostulation.

"Sir, you are pleased to be personal," observed Fussell, knitting his brows.

"No!—I am *not* pleased, and *that*, dull as you are, you may discern!" retorted George. "And, moreover, if this my displeasure moveth the like feeling in yourself, there is a ready remedy. Broadswords have been drawn ere now on less provocation."

"They may be drawn in a greater, ere I outrage the law or put my life into the hands of a harm-seeking rebel," replied Fussell, in a soft, placable tone, strangely at variance with the offence his words seemed to convey.

"I expected no better of thee!" retorted Strangwayes, with an impatient kick of the boot on the back of an unhappy cur which just then came fawning upon him, the property of the attorney. "Hate me, hate my dog!" thought Dewey; and, sidling towards Fussell, whom he apostrophized as his very good friend, he invited him to accompany him back to Blandford, leaving the sister and brother to come to a better understanding.

"The Lord will, peradventure, bring him to a sense of his evil-mindedness!" whispered Fussell to his future wife, as she accompanied him to the door with excuses and adieus. "For, behold, Mabellah Strangwayes, this day must judge between us! If you are for holding faith with me, be firm; for, as you now decide, so also shall you abide. Hence forward are we to be as man and wife, or as strangers."

Thus admonished, Mistress Mabel came back to her place to make a clear breast to her brother George of her intentions; and admit her positive determination and en-

gement to become in due season Mistress Obadiah Fussell, of Cross-street, Blandford.

"Of Cross-street, Blandford," replied Major Strangeways, mastering his indignation, "but of Mussen Farm no longer. From the first day I can remember, the ill-conditioned dog you would foist upon me for brother has been the special aversion of my soul. Not one of my schoolboy pranks, but he came maundering to my father to relate; and, when I grew to man's estate, and would fain have won the hand of poor Mildred Hooker to be my wife, he poisoned the ear of the family against me, our bans were forbidden, and Mildred was wedded against her will and choice to a ruffian, who——. But, no matter!—all this and more has been *his* doing; and I tell you, sister Mabel, *here* in the presence and fear of my Maker, that, once his wife, you set foot in Mussen Farm no more."

"That, heaven be blessed! lies not at your discretion," replied the irritated spinster. "Here dwell I, by lawful right, as tenant on lease; and here, maid, wife, or widow, will I abide, under shelter and succour of the law."

"That shall be seen," cried Strangeways.

"And, furthermore," pursued Mabella, incautiously, "it is the opinion of those more versed than I am in such matters that our good father's will, constituting me sole executrix of his estate, purported towards yourself—"

"So, so, so, so!" cried Major Strangeways, lacking patience to hear her to an end. "An attorney, but three months a widower, becomes suitor to my sister, and already threats of litigation between those who have hitherto lived together as friends, in the noblest acceptance of the word! What sin have I committed, to find myself engaged in conflict with this cloven-foot—this limb of the black art!"

"You talk as foolishly as wickedly," replied Mistress Mabel, without moving a muscle of her prim visage.

"I talk as frankly as resolutely," cried George, rising and confronting her. "Marry Obadiah Fussell, and, were you thrice my sister, you should forth from my gates but once, and that on your wedding-day."

"Your gates!—so you could show me where they stand?" retorted Mabellah, bridling contemptuously.

"Tempt me not to fulfil your request sooner than becoming," replied Strangwayes, growing as pale with emotion as he had heretofore been red with anger. "I would fain not have it said of me that I dealt harshly with my father's—and, what is more, my mother's, daughter."

"My father, (honour to his memory), took care to secure me from the attacks of your ungovernable temper, by constituting me his executrix," replied Mabellah. "And all that he failed in securing I have myself wisely made sure, by causing leases to be signed between us, such as endow me with the farm of Mussen for twenty and one years ensuing, and as many more, should it be my desire to renew my tenancy. For the rest, stock and furniture are wholly my own, and—"

"*How!*" interrupted the now infuriated man, "do my ears deceive me, or am I to convict my father's daughter of fraud and felony?—The stock, said ye, and furniture of Mussen?—Give up to me, woman, while I have patience to demand it, the bond by which—"

"To spare all further irritation on that point," interrupted Mabellah, "the bond, the will, ay, and whatsoever acts of law pertain to the property of the family, are now in the safe keeping of Master Fussell, soon to be my lawful lord and husband."

"Mabellah!" said George Strangwayes, "but one word more on this hateful subject!—Against yourself I dispute not. There are but two modes of disputation; those of the strong arm or the strong argument—and, for the first, you are a woman, and too much a weakling; for the second, a woman, and too much a fool: and in neither point a match for *me*. But, I speak for the warning of him who has put fraud into what was once an honest bosom; I speak for the warning of this pilfering, pettifogging attorney; whom—mark me, so surely as ye persist to wed, so surely will he be done to death by the hand of your brother!"

So saying, he rose and quitted the farm. He returned to Blandford: and next day the substance of all he had uttered to Mabellah did he commit to writing, and intrust

to the hands of his brother-in-law, Major Dewey, to be submitted in the form of cartel to Lawyer Fussell. But the attorney would as little hear of fighting as of retreating from his projects. He protested that Mistress Mabella was the wife of his choice; being of prudent years to undertake the charge of his motherless and mistressless family, and moreover too advanced to render it likely these burthens should be increased. In vain did Major Dewey represent to him, and appeal to the purposed bride for confirmation of the assertion, that it was only in terror of the sequestration, to which the exertions of George in the royal cause had rendered him amenable, that the estates of the family had been placed under her jurisdiction, and that to profit by this vexatious necessity was an act of positive dishonesty. Mistress Mabella's heart was set upon marriage; and, knowing that her attraction in the eyes of the puritan attorney lay in the lands and tenements of Mussen, she adhered to them—she persisted in asserting her rights—and subsequently in transferring them by marriage to Fussell. All that remained at last for the honest cavalier was to commence a suit in equity against Obadiah Fussell and his wife.

“So it was, however, that Westminster Hall could be by no means of eloquence or logic dispossessed of the idea that the whig lawyer was in the right, the cavalier in the wrong. He was nonsuited by juries of Dorsetshire and juries of Middlesex; he was set aside by justices and judges; he was set upon by sheriffs and tipstaves; his claims on the stock and furniture of Mussen Farm were pronounced null and void by the law, which refused to recognise private agreements in families, made for the express purpose of evading the penal statutes of the country.

By all this Major Strangways was at once impoverished and infuriated. Throughout the ranks of the cavaliers, there was not a braver nor more free-spirited man. To have contributed to the well-being of any member of his family, he would have made wondrous sacrifices: but to be despoiled of his own by the intrigues of a canting attorney was more than he could bear. Moreover, the gallant major had ulterior views on the disposal of Mus-

sen Farm and its appurtenances, such as rendered it painful as well as mortifying to find so considerable a share of his paternal inheritance subtracted by cunning from his hands. Mussen Farm he had purposed to bestow upon one dearer to him than life; and the prolongation of lease claimed by Mrs. Fussell perplexed him scarcely less than the usurpation of his goods and chattels attached to the property. A man of Herculean strength, and hitherto untouched by ailment, George Strangways now fell sick. A burning fever, attended with delirium, reduced him to the brink of the grave; and, on recovering his strength sufficiently for the business of life, he found that, during his sore sickness, his enemies had found means to poison against him the minds of his kinsfolk and acquaintance; that he was represented as a strong-handed man, going about to devour the substance of a sister, whom it was his duty to foster and protect; as a ruffian bidding defiance to the laws and legislature. He saw that all men avoided him as a brawler and peacebreaker. In Blandford, his native place, persons of honourable degree, connexions of his family, or hand-in-hand companions of his youth, were seen to cross the street rather than extend their hands to him in amicable greeting. He felt himself shunned—detested; he became morose, mistrustful, and at enmity with all his kind. George Strangways grew, in short, aweary of the world!

His sister Dewey was no more; and her husband, the demure major, who had been the first to insinuate into his mind displeasure against Fussell, taking fright at the family feuds he had assisted to stir up, gradually declined all intercourse with George. "Not that he insinuated unfair usage on the part of the major towards the attorney: but Fussell and himself were brethren in the spirit as well as the flesh;" and Dewey began to fear rebuke from the elders of his congregation. It was known that, having one day encountered Fussell in Westminster Hall, where a suit at law between them was then pending, Strangways defied him mortally, in the presence of men, saying, "That Calais sands was the fit place for men of birth and breeding to decide their quarrels—not the musty precincts of the Common Pleas."

One last letter of counsel was addressed, accordingly, by Major Dewey to the impetuous brother-in-law, whose cause he had made up his mind to abandon, representing that these incessant litigations had already eaten into his substance, and would eventually leave him no substance to eat; that his means and credit were declining, and that, soon, nothing would remain but to mortgage the estate of Mussen Farm, the object of this obstinate contest. But Strangways was unpersuadable! "Even unto life and death," he replied, "will I pursue this pitiful vagabond; and, when all else is gone, pawn even the sword so long devoted to my country, and become a bower of wood or drawer of water, rather than suffer the property of my fathers to be wrested from me without a struggle. At least, men shall have no cause to assert I lacked mettle or resolution; but, when I am gone for ever, they may write over my grave, 'Here lies one who resisted oppression, and lived and died an honourable cavalier!'"

Two years elapsed after the marriage of Mabellah Strangways, and ten since the death of her father; nor seemed there the remotest prospect of a period to the discords of the family. The sons of Fussell, by his first marriage, were at college; and Mabellah, at the head of his well-ordered household, took delight only in thrift and housewifery; laying up store of the things of this world, without conceit of the straits to which a long-pending suit in chancery had reduced her brother. Of George Strangways she heard little, save by the means of her brother-in-law, Dewey, when he returned to the county of Dorset from his duties at Westminster; the major averring that George spent the greater portion of his time at some farm in Kent, where he declined visits, and was said to pass his days in the sobrieties of study.

"Verily, I should say adieu and God speed thee, with some misgivings of mind," observed Mabellah to her husband, on taking leave of him previous to his departure from Blandford to London, at the commencement of Hilary Term, 1656, "were I not assured that my brother George dwelleth no longer in the metropolis. I would not that there should be further encounters or strife of words between ye. For though I am assured by our be-

loved brother-in-law, Dewey, (on whom is the esteem of men and the favour of his highness the protector,) that the fiery humour of my brother is much abated; yet it bringeth discredit both on thine and mine that there should be menace and defiance between one born of my flesh and one of my flesh by election. Therefore, good husband, do I rejoice with an exceeding great joy that the unruly major should have settled himself where ye shall nevermore encounter?"

"I have small fear of the braggart of so graceless a man," cried the Roundhead attorney, buttoning up his riding doublet, and commending to the care of his clerk (by whom he was to be escorted to the London courts) his cloke-bag, containing documents connected with the suits of law of the country clients in whose behoof he was undertaking the expedition.

"Look to the parchments, John Collins," quoth he, "enough for myself to have an eye and hand to the charge of money with which I am fain to encumber myself." And, having settled his pistols in his holsters, he mounted the hackney upon which, on the fourth day after departure from Blandford, it was his purpose to reach the metropolis. But he was molested by no grievance or mischance by the way. Although, each day at even-fall, Master Collins came clattering up to the heels of his master's galloway, in terror lest the bushes by the wayside should conceal some squire of the moonlight, or cutpurse gentleman of the road; nought occurred to put their courage to the proof, save a damp bed, when halting for the night at Basingstoke. Arrived in town, the two limbs of the law settled themselves at no vast distance from the great body to which they were collaterally attached; putting up hard by the Temple and the Inns of Court, at a lodging called the George and Half Moon, three doors from the Pallsgrave's Head Tavern, Temple Bar Without. Mr. Fussell, a man of sober and discreet habits, was already well known to the people of the house. Early to bed and early to rise, he was accustomed to go forth with his clerk and blue bag, at eight of the clock, to breakfast at the adjoining tavern, and to return at night-fall, his business concluded, to pass the remainder of the

evening in revising that of the day past, and arranging that of the day to come, at a scrutoire placed beside the window, overlooking the Strand; without other visitors than a scrivener or two, and one Diggins, a law-stationer of Chancery Lane.

It was on the sixth evening after the establishment of the Blandford attorney at his lodgings, that he returned, as usual, at an early hour, fatigued by press of business, and announcing his intent to refresh himself with a cup of Dorchester ale, ere he retired to rest, that he might be on foot betimes on the morrow; and John Collins, who had been plotting with the apprentices of the law-stationer to escape from the George the moment his master should be fast, in order to enjoy his first carouse with the gay youngsters of the capital, sat watching with an anxious eye the proceedings of his master, who had taken up his usual position at the scrutoire, to affix dockets on certain files of papers, ere he laid them aside. When, lo! to his infinite consternation, he beheld the over-wearied attorney fall forward, overcome with sleep, upon his desk, as was no unusual case with him after a day of severe exertion.

"And so farewell my night's pleasuring!" bethought the clerk. "There he lies—fast as St. Clement's church; and I am penned here till midnight like a silly sheep in fold!"

It was in vain that Collins strove to invade poor Fussell's slumbers by letting fall divers ponderous law-folios, borrowed by the attorney of his friend Diggins for present reference. The sleeping lawyer budged not. At length, despairing of obtaining his liberty, when he heard the neighbouring church of St. Dunstan's chime out ten of the clock, John Collins, on pretence of a question to be urged touching the disposal of the morrow's business, jogged the elbow of his master, and, receiving no answer, jogged and jogged again. A sudden apprehension of mischief caused him, at length, to raise the head of his master from the desk; when a stream of blood gushed from his mouth and nostrils!

Starting back with horror at the sight, the clerk decomposed the attitude of the unhappy man, so that he fell prostrate from the chair upon the floor; when Col-

lins, nothing doubting that his master was labouring under a fit of apoplexy, flew to the door, and, with loud outcries, summoned the whole house to his assistance. The lifeless attorney was laid upon a couch, when, lo! fatal proof became apparent that he had fallen a victim to assassination. The orifice of a gunshot wound was visible on his forehead—another in his cheek; and the nearest surgeon, hastily called in, declared that, having been shot through the head, his life had been at least two hours extinct.

Officers of justice were now summoned—a search prosecuted; and, in addition to the bullets which had entered the body of the murdered man, a slug was found lodged in the window-sill, from the direction of which, it was plain that aim had been taken by some person standing on the opposite pavement of the street, whence the head of Fussell, as he sat at his desk, was visible through the half-drawn curtain. The passage, indeed, by which the bullets had entered the window, was so narrow, that but an inch more or less must have defeated the purpose of the assassin.

The first object of the constables of the night was to institute a minute search in the Strand and its adjacent streets and passages. But the time was past; the man of blood had effectually escaped, and all was silence and peace in the highways of the city. The afflicted clerk, who, from his position relatively to the deceased, stood exposed to strong suspicion, was secured for the night; and, on his examination the following morning before the magistrates, having admitted that he had declared to one Smith (a barber, lodging in the same house, whose services had been required by his unfortunate master,) that Fussell had brought with him a considerable charge of money to deposite in the hands of Master Snow, an eminent goldsmith and money-broker, established at Temple Bar, the said Smith was arrested, and proof obtained that, throughout the night and preceding day, he had been absent from his lodgings.

On further examination, however, an *alibi* was established by the terrified barber; and all remained in per-

plexity and horror, waiting the arrival of Fussell's eldest son, who had been sent for express from Oxford.

The first exclamation that escaped the lips of this youth on being introduced into the chamber where lay the dead body of his parent was—"This is the act and deed of my uncle Strangways!" upon which the magistrates, eager to accomplish the ends of justice, (having made themselves masters of the nature of the disputes prevailing between the deceased and his brother-in-law, and the threats often held forth by the latter,) promoted so diligent a search, as caused George Strangways to be laid hold of, on the following morning, while in his bed and lodging, over against Ivy Bridge, in the Strand, near to the spot where now stands Bull Inn Court.

Yet, strong as was the suspicion against him, so undaunted was the bearing of the major, under examination before Mr. Justice Blake, who conducted the proceedings, that public opinion decided strongly in his favour, and a general murmur rose in the crowded justice-room, when Strangways was required by the magistrates to repair to the chamber containing the corpse, and submit to the ordeal, then popular, of touching the wounds of the deceased in presence of the coroner and jury. But the gashes bled not—the dead man stirred not; and the spectators, with full faith in the mysteries of sympathy, avowed their conviction in favour of the prisoner. Still, till the delivery of a verdict, Justice Blake decided that he should be remanded to prison; and the proceedings of the inquest were once more diligently resumed, though with little chance of success. In a city so populous, what hope that a delinquent should be detected, whose crime it was supposed must originate in mistake, the only known enemy of the deceased being already virtually acquitted of the charge? The foreman of the jury, indeed, suggested as a last expedient that all the owners of gunsmiths' shops in London and the suburbs should be examined touching the fire-arms they had recently disposed of. But this seemed a difficult task; and a jurymen, named Halloway, a gunsmith, in the Strand, even stated to the coroner that his profession was so numerous as to render it impossible. "I, myself," said he, "*lent* a carbine on

the day of the murder, and so, doubtless, did many of the trade; yet it would puzzle me at this moment to name the borrower." Forthwith, however, Holloway was made by the coroner to refresh his recollections, and, after some delay, succeeded in calling to mind a gentleman named Thompson, of Long Acre, formerly major in the army of the king, and now married to a daughter of Sir James Aston.

A search was instituted for Major Thompson, who, having already disappeared, his lady was arrested in his stead—their calling and Roman Catholic connexion finding little favour in the eyes of a Roundhead magistrate. But, on the news of his wife's arrest, the cavalier surrendered himself, and admitted that he had indeed borrowed a carbine of Master Holloway on the day in question, for a friend, who purposed to use it in deer-shooting, on a visit he was about to pay at the park of a noble earl of the county of Kent. The name of this friend he for some time refused to give up, but, on being pressed with the threat of fresh rigours against his lady, who was still in confinement, Thompson admitted that it was none other than George Strangwayes, the brother-in-law of Obadiah Fussell, to whom he delivered the carbine, loaded with a brace of bullets and a slug, between seven and eight at night, in the churchyard of St. Clement's, and received it back again at his own lodging, between ten and eleven, from the major, who stated that, having postponed his visit, he had no further occasion for the piece. Such evidence was considered sufficient to justify the full commitment of Major Strangwayes to Newgate, to take his trial for the murder.

It was on the 24th of February, 1657, that this desperate man was finally arraigned at the Sessions House, in the Old Bailey, before Lord Chief Justice Glyn. But, having heard his indictment recited, and being required to plead (according to the usual form) "Guilty" or "Not Guilty" of the charge, neither menace nor persuasion would induce the hardy soldier of King Charles to hold up his hand in the courts of the commonwealth. It was in vain the learned Glyn and the rest of the bench urged that, should he continue in contempt of court, his crime

involved no less a sentence than the horrible punishment of pressing to death. Not even the terrors of such a fate could determine Strangwayes to submit to any ordinary course of law. Having wasted hours in argument, the venerable judge descended to entreaty—to tears; imploring the accused not to offer himself as so fearful an example.

“Let the rigour of the law of England take its course!” replied Major Strangwayes, in a firm voice. “We have seen a pretended tribunal pour forth the innocent blood of its best and noblest—even of the martyr Charles Stuart—(a saint in heaven.) Spare not, therefore, mine, who own myself a sinner, whether guilty or not of the one misdemeanour laid to my charge.”

“Yet, bethink thee, rash man, while heaven still allows an outlet of escape from the agonies of death about to be adjudged thee,” said the venerable Glyn, “bethink thee that, though direct proof against thee there is none—”

“I will bethink me only of submission to the sentence ye shall pronounce,” interrupted the bold major. “Leave me to make my peace with God—with man, alas! it can never more be made.”

Whereupon, slowly rising, and dashing away the tears of mercy that stood on his furrowed cheeks, the Lord Chief Justice rose, amid the breathless stillness of the court, and, putting on the cap tendered him by his macer, pronounced sentence on the prisoner:—

“George Strangwayes, of Mussen, in the county of Dorset,” said he, “sometime major in the armies of Charles Stuart, convicted of contempt of the most worshipful Court of Sessions of the county of Middlesex, holden at the Old Bailey, it is the decrees of a jury of your countrymen, that ye be sent back to the place from whence ye came, and thence to the press-yard of the prison of Newgate; where, being laid bare upon your back, with your arms and legs stretched forth by cords, one to one side, the other to the other, as much iron and stone shall be laid upon your body as you can bear. The first day ye shall have three morsels of barley bread, and the next day drink thrice of the water from the channel nearest

to your prison door ; and this shall be your punishment till you die !”

All present heard and shuddered, the prisoner alone maintaining a steadfast countenance. To Newgate he returned without a word spoken ; and that night several eminent divines waited upon him, some by will of the protector, some in private charity, to prepare his soul for death, and counsel him to tender submission to government. To the clergy thus assembled he replied with becoming reverence as regarded the hopes of his salvation, professing humble faith in Christ, and an earnest hope to be brought through his merits to the mercy and glory of God ; but denying the authority of Cromwell, and keeping his loyalty to the last. To one, however, of the members (Dr. Warmester) he addressed himself for private spiritual comfort ; and, the rest having departed, exceeding sorrowful at his contumacy, the good doctor obtained leave of the sheriffs to attend him in his cell, at the same hour that his brother-in-law, Dewey, was to take a last leave of the condemned.

“ Doctor,” said the dauntless Strangways, when they three were alone together within the four stone walls of the cell, “ take—write—and bear witness of me !”

“ A confession !” was the involuntary ejaculation of Dr. Warmester. “ Then heaven has in its mercy touched a callous heart.”

“ No confession !” replied Strangways, in a firm voice ; “ unless, indeed, that I appeal not against the justice of my judge. Neither pincers of iron, nor other implement of human cruelty, could wring from me such confession as would bring upon my head the ignominy of the gibbet, and cause my estate to be forfeited to the law. There are those of my kin, to whom the lands of Mussen must descend when I am dead and gone” (Major Dewey here drew forth a kerchief of ample dimensions ;) “ I should not rest in my grave, doctor, did I imagine that the estates of my forefathers were to fall into the hands of traitors and regicides !”

“ I beseech you, good brother, take heed of your words, that you offend not with your tongue,” mildly interposed

Dewey ; "not that I would insinuate distrust of the worthy divine here present—but—"

"So much the better," interrupted the brave cavalier with a smile ; "since it is *him*, and no other, I humbly pray to accept the office of my executorship, and the bequest of my whole property and estate"—the major turning pale and trembled—"to have and to hold in trust for such purposes as I shall confide to his discretion"—the major breathed again—"requesting you, brother Dewey, as one of my nearest kismen, to subscribe as witness this my last will and testament."

To refuse, and refuse in ignorance of the nature of a bequest which might purport good to him and his, was out of the question. With a trembling hand, Dewey affixed his signature to the document thus hastily prepared ; the turnkeys adding their names, for further testimony.

"I am every moment awaiting the arrival of her to whom this trust is dedicated," observed Strangways, when all was done and the paper conveyed to the charge of the governor of the prison ; and scarcely had Dewey time to recover his surprise, when the door of the cell opened, and a turnkey re-appeared bearing a lovely child, a girl of some six years old, who, on beholding Strangways, called on him in a piteous voice by the name of "Father ;" and, springing into his arms, hid her sweet face in his bosom, so that nought was visible but the long rings of her radiant hair veiling her little shoulders.

"Rachel !" faltered the prisoner, his strong voice waxing weak as he addressed the child.

"Father ! dear, dear father !" murmured the little creature in reply. "What art thou doing, father, in this dark, sad place ? It is so long since thou wert down at Beechwood ; and I have wearied for thee so grievously ! Winter is almost gone ; there are white snow-drops springing up, and the briars budding in the garden-hedge. Come back with me, father, to Beechwood ; come away from these great gloomy walls and this loud, noisy city. The blackbird is sitting again in the orchard ; and I have been so good, so *very* good, Nurse Blanchard promised to tell you how quiet and how good I have been—never once

going near the bird upon her nest, because thou lovest so well the song of the blackbird of a summer afternoon. Father, father! thou art weeping?"

No one had courage to interrupt the little prattler; no one had courage to exhort the unhappy Strangwayes, as he clasped the tender babe more closely to his breast, and imprinted kiss after kiss, kisses mingled with tears, upon her cheeks and brows.

"Rachel!" said he at last, when he could gather courage to address her, "thy father is going on a long journey, a long, painful journey; and it will be months, years, many, many years, ere we two meet again. Henceforward, Rachel, thy good nurse will be all in all to thee, saving, above both her and thee, the authority of this worthy gentleman, thy spiritual pastor, and above even *him* the Lord Most High, who will be a stay to thy orphan condition. When I am gone, Rachel, see thou be submissive unto their will! Shouldst thou grow to woman's estate, make thy fortunes among such as are faithful to the cause of thy exiled and lawful sovereign; fear God, my child, honour the king! Be true in word and deed, and unto others mild and merciful, as thou shalt thyself expect mercy!"

"But I will go with thee, father," sobbed Rachel, when the voice of her protector ceased speaking. "Take me with thee, dear, dear, good father, take me with thee! I will be so orderly, so diligent, so obedient, so thou wilt only sit beside me at night, as thou wert wont when I lay down to sleep, and suffer me to kneel by thy side at morning when I offer up my prayer. Dear, dear father, I will not be denied—I will—I *will* go with thee!"

"Rachel, it must not be!" said the agonized father, not daring to move, lest the babe should take cognisance of the irons with which he was loaded. "Thou must even now bid me farewell, and away; and be it as a token of love betwixt us, little Rachel, that thou leavest me without murmur, so as to spare a pang to the father that so dearly loves thee!"

The young child listened. Her bosom heaved, as she laboured with a sore effort to restrain her falling tears. She looked up wistfully in her father's face, and the sobs

were repressed upon her quivering lip, as she pressed it to his cheek, his brow, his chin, in the outpouring of her innocent tenderness. She uttered not a single syllable, she dared not trust herself to speak; but, with unheard-of self-command, stretched out her fair arms silently towards the turnkey who had brought her to the cell, and who now stood beside the grated door, with tears coursing down his rugged face. Another moment, and all was dark: the door had turned on its sullen hinge, and closed again upon the man and his burden; and, lo! it seemed as if a sunbeam had been suddenly withdrawn from the place.

For a time not a word was spoken.

"That child, brother Dewey, is the child of Mildred Hooker!" said Strangways, at length breaking silence, *and it is mine!*" Mildred has been six years dead, (she died in giving birth to my babe,) and Rachel will soon be an orphan. Marvel not, therefore, that I find courage to confront a death of pain and terror to secure to the offspring of one so tenderly beloved, the means of maintenance. It was by the cunning of Obadiah Fussell that Mildred was wrested from me as my bride, and bestowed on a man who within two years of her marriage made off to Virginia, leaving her to want and shame. In my arms did she take refuge! We had tidings, but doubtful, of the death of her husband; and there was need that the marriage which we formed at the altar, (ay! by legal form at the altar,) should be kept close till a sure certificate of his interment came to hand. Death stepped in between. It was my faithful Mildred's interment I had to certify. From that day the cottage at Beechwood became my home, the babe my solace. Oh! that lawless dealing had not served to thrust me thence for ever, and deprive my poor infant of the tender watchfulness of a father!"

"And, as touching the violent end of poor Fussell?" observed the divine, perceiving the heart of the prisoner to be softened, and hoping the moment might be favourable to obtain a confession.

"As touching that unhappy man, who would have robbed me of the last morsel destined to preserve the life of my child, I pray ye let no more be said!" replied

Strangwayes, in a tone of resolution. "The God of vengeance knows for what I have to answer. All that remains to me of time must be devoted to preparations for eternity."

And it was done so! All that night the worthy divine remained with Strangwayes, breathing words of comfort and promises of peace. Early in the morning came Dewey again, with many cavaliers, who had served in happier times with the brave soldier. Of each George Strangwayes took an affectionate but manly leave; refusing to give ear to their entreaties that he would release himself from coming torture by confession.

"My house and lands shall never fall to the lot of the Regicides," was his still reiterated reply. "A holy and a happy purpose awaits the destination of Mussen Farm."

Already the javelin-men were assembled; and the sheriffs came forth with pale faces to preside over this frightful execution. The bell of Christchurch tower tolled heavily; the ordinary began reciting the service of burial of the dead; when George Strangwayes, clad in a close-fitting garb of white, covered with a long mourning cloak, was led forth into the press-yard. The very executioners looked aghast, as scarcely knowing what course to pursue.

"Doctor! support me with your prayers," said the cavalier in a solemn voice, addressing Dr. Warmester, who stood there with his hands devoutly folded on his breast. "For *you*, friends!" he added, addressing such of his party as were there to do him friendship to the last, "when the weights are put on, I pray you leap upon my body, that my sufferings be abridged."

And, dreadful as was the duty, they had courage to comply. The ponderous masses of iron and stone were upheaved on the press placed upon the outstretched body of the victim, until heavy groans burst forth, bearing involuntary token of his anguish. At that signal, three stout cavaliers flung themselves with headlong pressure on the body; and, after one more doleful cry, all was still: the spirit had departed from its tortured dwelling-place of clay!

Some hours afterwards the weights were taken off,

and the wooden press on which they were deposited removed. It was seen that, by the humanity of the executioners, an angle of the press had been purposely placed over the heart of the victim, to put a speedier end to his torments ; for, by the injunction of the protector, the sharp billet usually placed under the backs of malefactors condemned to the horrible fate of pressing to death to hasten the execution, had been withheld from George Strangwayes, the malignant. By the interference of Dr. Warmester, the mangled body was placed in a decent coffin, and interred at the north-western corner of the cemetery in Moorfields. There may a plain headstone still be seen, bearing the initials G. S., A. D. 1657 ; and nigh unto it a small mossy ridge. For, the child Rachel having soon pined away unto death, the divine who ministered to the last moments of her father, caused her to be laid at the feet of him who, for her sake, had braved the utmost rigour of the law ; and, whereas, by the death of the innocent, the estate of Mussen fell to his absolute disposal, Warmester bestowed it in perpetual endowment upon the school of Christ's Hospital, in the city of London.

It is averred that, previously to the execution of the unfortunate Strangwayes, many persons waited upon Cromwell, (among others Major Dewey, the parliamentarian, and Mabellah, the widow of Fussell,) to implore commutation of his sentence. But the protector remained inexorable, replying to them in the words used by the barons of England at Merton in 1258, in rejection of the factious petition of the clergy :

" Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari ! "

END OF VOL. II.

Done in the City of London



MAY 10 1955

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